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**MAITLAND OF LETHINGTON**

**AND**

**THE SCOTLAND OF MARY STUART**





MAITLAND OF LETHINGTON

AND

THE SCOTLAND OF MARY STUART

*A HISTORY*

BY

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[*Note to Volume Two.*—*I have succeeded in bringing within the compass of a single volume the events of Maitland's life from the return of Mury in 1561 to his death in 1573. This, however, has only been effected by a process of severe compression,—many interesting letters having been abridged or omitted. I purpose to collect in another volume "The Letters of Lethington," illustrated by extracts from contemporary writings and records. But as "the letters" will be published separately, "the life" may now be regarded as complete.—J. S.*]

**BOOK II.**

**FROM MARY'S RETURN IN 1561 TO  
HER ABDICATION IN 1567**





## MAITLAND OF LETHINGTON.

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### CHAPTER ONE.

#### MAITLAND AND KNOX.

MARY landed at Leith on the 19th of August 1561; she was married to her cousin Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, on the 29th of July 1565. During these years her life, though uneventful, was not unhappy. Holyrood was the headquarters of the Court, and the sombre old pile, which had more than once been gutted by the "auld enemy," put on something of summer brightness during her stay. Mary had the easy manners of her race; she cared little for ceremony or ceremonial state; had she been a man she would have sought adventure like her father

—“riding out through any part of the realm him alone, unknown that he was king.” She dined with the wealthier citizens; for the poorest she had a ready smile and a pleasant word. The Reformers complained that she was addicted to dancing,—“her common speech in secret was, she saw nothing in Scotland but gravitie, which she could not agree weill with, for she was brought up in joyousitie—so termed she dancing and other things thereto belonging;”<sup>1</sup> and there were frequent sports and masques among the courtiers and the ladies of the Court, after the somewhat ponderous fashions of the time. Yet graver matters were not neglected,—she read Livy “daily” with Buchanan,<sup>2</sup> she sat in Council with her nobles, the envoys of foreign princes were duly welcomed and hospitably entertained. She did not, however, I believe, care much for Holyrood; the palace lay low among its marshes; and the turbulent Calvinism of the capital was a constant menace to a Catholic queen. It was at Falkland and St Andrews that she felt most at home. She loved the hardy outdoor life with hawk and hound. During the four years preceding her marriage, passing, as I have said

<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, ii. 159.

<sup>2</sup> “The Queen readeth daily after her dinner, instructed by a learned man, Mr George Buchanan, somewhat of Livy.”

—Randolph to Cecil, April 7, 1562. When the *date* only is given, the letter is in the Rolls House.

elsewhere, whole days in the saddle, she had ridden through every part of her kingdom, except the wild and inaccessible district between the Cromarty and the Pentland Firths. Before she had been a month in Scotland she had visited Linlithgow, Stirling, Perth, and St Andrews. The spring of 1562 was spent in Fife; the autumn in the northern counties. She was at Castle Campbell in January 1563, when the Lady Margaret was married to Sir James Stewart of Doune. She went back for a few weeks to Holyrood, but she left again in February, and did not return till the end of May. She had promised to go to Inverary early in June; but Lethington, who had been in France, was still absent, and she was anxious to confer with him before she left. "We have now looked so long for the Lord of Lethington that we are almost at our wits'-end. The Queen thinketh it long, and hath stayed her journey towards Argyle these seven days, with purpose whether he come or not to depart upon Tuesday next."<sup>1</sup> On the 29th of June (Lethington having in the meantime returned) she started for Inverary, where

<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, June 19, 1563. Lethington had been on a mission to France. Randolph adds: "Some others think that some misfortune is fallen unto him, others more maliciously report, and say that he is stayed there, and commanded to keep his house. Thus I am sure that some would have it. In this sort they dally with their own merry conceits."

she arrived on the 22d of July. Crossing the Clyde and making a long round through Ayrshire and the Stewartry to St Mary's Isle, it was the late autumn before she regained the capital. The spring of 1564 was passed in Fife; then in July, Parliament having been dissolved, she went to the great deer-hunt in Athol, where "three hundred and sixty deer, with five wolves, and some roes," were slain; crossed the "Mounth" to Inverness; visited the Chanonry of Ross; and returning leisurely by the east coast, reached Holyrood on the 26th of September. She was at Wemyss Castle in Fife when, on 16th February 1565, she met Darnley for the first time; and it is probable that she was with Athol at Dunkeld some time in June of the same year, for it was on her return from the Highlands that, hearing of the plot of the disaffected nobles to kidnap her lover and herself, she rode from Perth by the Queensferry in one day to Lord Livingston's house of Callendar—a ride of not less than forty miles.

During most of this time Maitland, as the Prime Minister of the Queen, was the most conspicuous figure at the Scottish Court. In all Scotland, indeed, no man, Knox only excepted, was more widely known, or, upon the whole, more widely liked. He had attained a great political position; and Mary, one of the most

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generous of women, was even extravagantly munificent to her favourite ministers. She created her brother, the Lord James, Earl of Moray, enriching him with the spoil of half-a-score of abbeys; the revenues of Crossraguel were given to Buchanan; and out of the Church lands round Haddington ample provision was made for Maitland. "At my arrival at Dunbar, I heard that the Lord of Ledington was at Ledington, taking possession of the whole abbacy which the Queen had given him, so that he is now equal with any man that hath his whole lands lying in Lothian. I chanced upon him there, and accompanied him the next day to Edinburgh."<sup>1</sup> Many of the men who had been the recipients of Mary's bounty came by-and-by to conspire against her: Buchanan took away her good name, Moray her crown; but Maitland, as I expect to be able to show, was never ungrateful to his liberal mistress. The relations between them were from first to last (with hardly a break) intimate and cordial. There can be no doubt, I think, that Maitland was warmly attached to Mary. He vindicated her title; he advocated her claims; he believed quite sincerely that, supported as she was by the great nobles and the mass of the common people in

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, Dec. 13, 1563.



either realm, she was in the end bound to win ; and though his confidence must have been sometimes severely tried, yet even when her fortunes grew hopeless, he clung to the cause which he had made his own with obstinate fidelity, and he laid down his life in a service which had become desperate. The personal fascination of the Queen unquestionably accounts for several incidents in his career which, on any other theory of the motives by which he was influenced, would appear inexplicable. It must be frankly admitted that on more than one occasion his policy, as her minister, could not have been dictated by political considerations only ; and we are driven to conclude that even the cool and wary diplomatist had not been insusceptible to "the enchantment whereby men are bewitched."

Of the policy, civil and ecclesiastical, which Maitland pursued, of his attitude to the great political and religious problems of the age, I have now to speak ; and I shall endeavour to do so as clearly and briefly as is practicable. It is necessary that the arguments which weighed with the men to whom he was opposed should be fairly stated ; and I propose to state them, as far as need be, in their own words. In this chapter, therefore, the chief figures will be Maitland and — Knox ; in the next, Maitland and — Cecil.

The most charming and spontaneous of German lyrists insists, in his essay on the Romantic revival, that Leo X. was just as zealous a Protestant as Luther. Luther's protest at Wittenberg was in Latin prose; Leo's at Rome in stone and colour and ottava rhymes. "Do not the vigorous marbles of Michael Angelo, Giulio Romano's laughing nymph-faces, and the life-intoxicated merriment in the verses of Master Ludovico, offer a protesting contrast to the old gloomy withered Catholicism?" And he concludes that the painters of Italy, "plunging into the sea of Grecian mirthfulness," combated priesthood more effectively than the Saxon theologians; and that the Venus of Titian was a better treatise against an ascetic spirituality than that nailed to the church door of Wittenberg.

The bubbles blown by a jester like Heine are sometimes more suggestive than the weightiest argument of the moralist. No one knew better than Heine did that the passage from which I have quoted was in one sense (the Italian renaissance being in comparison with the German sterile if not corrupt) extravagantly unfair. But it is not to be denied that in another and possibly a larger sense it is the simplest statement of fact. The Reformation, in its initiation and in its essence, was a measure of enfranchisement. It was a mental, as well as a moral and spiritual,

revolt; the aspiration of the intellect for "an ampler ether," as well as the aspiration of the conscience for "a diviner air."

The Church of Rome, which had once done much for the freedom of mankind,<sup>1</sup> had latterly become a burden too heavy to be borne. A colossal system of priestcraft, of sacerdotal pretences and sacramental mystifications, was supported by sanctions which, when not artificial, were immoral. The Maker of heaven and earth could only be approached through the priest; the priest was often a man of ill-repute; the penalties of wrong-doing were remitted, the grace of God was secured, not by repentance and amendment of life, but by the conjuring of a consecrated caste; pardons for past sins, indulgences for future sins, might be bought for money. This clerical absolutism, as arbitrary as it was unconscientious, as sordid as it was corrupt, as hurtful to intellectual freedom and political liberty as to the spiritual life, was the system which the Reformers undertook to abolish.

But—happily or unhappily, according to the point of view—few of the Reformers had any

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<sup>1</sup> Even Heine, in the essay from which I have quoted, admits that the Catholic Church had had a wholesome effect on "the over-robust" races of the North. "Through grand genial institutions it controlled the bestiality of the barbarous hordes of the North, and tamed their brutal materialism."

adequate conception of the higher and wider interests which their struggle against an exclusive sacerdotalism involved. Protestantism is the religion of reasonableness as opposed to the religion of authority, and the Protestant who puts an infallible book or an infallible creed in the place of an infallible Church is disloyal to the principles of the Reformation, if not to the practice of the Reformers. The practice, we may admit, was not uniform or consistent; but the men who most powerfully impressed the infant Churches of the Continent were the Luthers and the Calvins. It was the same in Scotland. Maitland represented the spirit of criticism, Knox the spirit of dogma; yet it cannot be said that Maitland was more successful than Erasmus.

Sainte Aldegonde—a man of versatile ability, a poet, an orator, a theologian, a fine scholar, an acute diplomatist—was one of the most accomplished leaders of the Protestant revolt in the Netherlands; yet even Sainte Aldegonde was vexed and irritated by the tolerant temper of William the Silent. “The affair of the Anabaptists,” he wrote on one occasion, “has been renewed. The Prince objects to exclude them from citizenship. He answered me sharply that their yea was equal to our oath, and that we should not press this matter unless we were willing to confess that it was just for the Papists

to compel us to a divine service which was against our conscience. In short, I don't see how we can accomplish our wish in this matter. The Prince has uttered reproaches to me that our clergy are striving to obtain a mastery over consciences. He praised lately the saying of a monk who was not long ago here, that our pot had not gone to the fire as often as that of our antagonists, but that when the time came it would be black enough. In short, the Prince fears that after a few centuries the clerical tyranny on both sides will stand in this respect on the same footing."

Wise and memorable words! The Prince was not mistaken; in the highest sense—as a vindication, that is, of the rights of reason and conscience, as a protest against a sacerdotal monopoly, as well as against an incredible superstition—the Reformation failed,—nowhere more conspicuously than in Scotland. The Reformers did not loose the bonds of superstition: they banished one incredibility to replace it by another. And the Church of Knox was as arbitrary, as domineering, as greedy of power, as the Church of Hildebrand.

We are now told that the conjunction was inevitable; it was the sixteenth century, not the nineteenth; the age needed a Luther and a Knox. A conservative reformation undertaken

by Erasmus or Maitland could not have successfully resisted the inevitable Catholic reaction. This is the argument, as I understand it; but we are not informed how far the Catholic reaction was rendered "inevitable" by the Calvinist and the Iconoclast.

When Mary returned to Scotland in August 1561, what may be called a provisional government was in existence. The fabric of Catholicism had been shaken—not shattered. The citizens of the burghs were Protestants. A certain number of the greater and lesser barons were "earnest professors." But there were great Catholic nobles, and the new ideas had not reached the rural and Highland districts. In the populous towns the monastic buildings had been wrecked. The patrimony of the Church had been secularised; but the alienations were frequently nominal, and if Catholicism had been restored, the revenues would have been recovered, and applied to the purposes of religion. So far as a Parliamentary Convention could disestablish and disendow the Church, it had been disestablished and disendowed; but statutory definitions do not always correspond with the fact, and what was legally dead might yet be politically and practically alive. There was a want of authority everywhere, and the force which was strong at the centre became weak, if not im-

potent, before it reached the extremities. The new ecclesiastical organisation was yet in its infancy. Knox was a power in himself; but he was still an eruptive and revolutionary power;<sup>1</sup> and except in the towns he had no considerable following. The nobles, with a few exceptions, were careless, if not cold. It was exceptionally a period of transition, and the next few years would determine what impress the Church and the nation would take. Mary, during these years, was the central figure; but the real struggle, as we shall see, lay between Knox and Lethington.

The ecclesiastical policy which Maitland pursued may be defined in a sentence. He was strenuously opposed to whatever would render a religious peace between England and Scotland, between Elizabeth and Mary, difficult or impracticable.

The Confession of Faith had not been approved by Elizabeth. Its bitter Calvinism was little to her taste, and Cecil would probably have been pleased if its sanction by the Estates had been postponed to a more convenient season. Maitland had done what he could to mitigate its austerity; but he probably regarded the abstract

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<sup>1</sup> Knox once tried to persuade Elizabeth that he was a moderate reformer; but she would not listen to him.—National MSS. of Scotland, iii. 45.

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propositions of theology with indifference, and it was only where it trenched upon civil rights and duties that he insisted on its revision. Maitland, no less than Elizabeth, was keenly opposed to theocratic government; the Church was very well in its place; but a parliament of preachers would have been simply intolerable. The Church of Rome had been an *imperium in imperio*: for this among other reasons the Church of Rome had been abolished. It appeared to Maitland, as it appeared to Elizabeth, that the ecclesiastical society which undertook to exercise temporal as well as spiritual lordship, must become a focus of sedition, and consequently a danger to the State; and that any proposal, however modestly disguised or studiously veiled, to override the law of the land by the law of the Church was to be steadily resisted. Knox was eager to have the Book of Discipline accepted by the lords; but Maitland's opposition to a scheme, involving a domestic inquisition and a social censorship, could not be overcome.

Maitland's position, on the other hand, as regards Mary's Catholicism, though constantly misunderstood and misrepresented, is not less clear. It was not to be expected that Mary would be persuaded to join a Calvinistic and Presbyterian Church. But the Church of Elizabeth was in a different position; the English Church could



hardly be said to have relinquished the Catholic tradition. The new creed of Northern Christendom had not had time to crystallise ; and the doctrinal standards of the various sects were not yet regarded with the unreasoning reverence which time and habit beget. There was nothing in Maitland's view to prevent an "accord" between Mary and Elizabeth ; nothing in fact to make a religious peace between the Churches of the two nations hopeless. The preachers did their best to mar the prospects of union. They affronted the Queen. They insulted her ministers. They inveighed against her creed. They presented Protestantism to her in its most repellent aspect. But Maitland did not despair. The advantages of an accord on matters of religion between the two Queens and the two nations being so obvious, he believed that if Mary and Elizabeth *met* the difficulties might be removed. Some articles of peace, some comprehensive settlement tolerable to all reasonable men, might surely be devised. It is certain that Knox, who hated Prelacy nearly as hotly as he hated Popery, did not view the scheme with a friendly eye ; and Cecil, holding that Mary, Catholic-Protestant or Protestant-Catholic, would always be a menace to Elizabeth, was secretly hostile. The interview never took place ; and as time wore on, the differences which had once been

capable of peaceful adjustment, were emphasised and accentuated.

Mary was not invited on her return to ratify the proceedings of the Parliament which had abolished the ancient Church. She had refused to do so before she left France; the Parliament of 1560, she alleged, had neither been lawfully convened nor lawfully constituted. A compromise that left matters open for any subsequent change of circumstances was agreed to with apparent unanimity. The proclamation of 25th August 1561 was probably drawn by Maitland. It provided that the form of religion presently "standing" should in the meantime be continued. The final settlement was purposely delayed. The proclamation was substantially a declaration that the whole religious state was provisional. This was exactly what Maitland in the interests of a comprehensive pacification must have desired. There was at least no legislative bar to union; a truce had been proclaimed; and when passion had cooled and prejudices had been conciliated, union might come.

I am aware that this view of Maitland's ecclesiastical policy is somewhat unusual. But I believe it to be in accordance with the facts which have been recorded, not, it may be, by ecclesiastical historians, but by contemporary writers whose fairness and impartiality are undoubted.

To a consecutive narrative of these facts—the incidents of the struggle between Maitland's policy of peace and Knox's policy of exasperation—I must now address myself.

The objects then of Maitland's policy were :  
(1) To prevent Scottish Protestantism from assuming a form that would make an accord with Elizabeth and English Protestantism impossible.  
(2) To bring the Queens together, with the view of concluding a comprehensive religious peace between the two nations on a reasonable basis.  
(3) To dissuade the preachers from presenting such a caricature of Protestantism to Mary as might confirm her attachment to Catholicism and increase the difficulties of an accord. (4) To restrain the extravagant pretensions of the preachers, whose doctrines of spiritual independence and spiritual supremacy were incompatible, in his view, with the maintenance of civil authority and orderly government.

1. It is known that the Confession of Faith, before it was ratified by the Estates, had been submitted to Maitland and the Lord James for revision. They had together gone over it ; they had modified the severity of its language ; and they had deleted one whole chapter—on the duty of subjects to the civil power—which would certainly have proved distasteful to Elizabeth. But Maitland and Randolph were obviously

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extremely doubtful whether even the revised version would be acceptable at Westminster. "If my poor advice might have been heard," the English envoy was careful to explain to Cecil, "touching the Confession of Faith, it should not so soon have come into the light. God hath sent it better success for the confirmation thereof than was looked for; it passed men's expectations to see it pass in such sort as it did. Before that it was published or many words spoken of it, it was presented unto certain of the lords to see their judgment. It was committed unto the Lord of Lethington and the Sub-Prior to be examined. Though they could not reprove the doctrine, yet did they mitigate the austerity of many words and sentences which sounded to proceed rather of some evil conceived opinion than of any sound judgment. The author of the work had also put in his treatise a title or chapter of the obedience or disobedience that subjects owe unto their magistrates, that contained little less matter in few words than hath been otherwise written more at large. The surveyors of this work thought it to be an unfit matter to be treated at that time, and so gave their advice to have it out."<sup>1</sup> A week later Maitland wrote to Cecil to the same effect.

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 7th September 1560.

It was not yet too late, he added, to amend any article that Elizabeth might hold to be amiss. "If there be anything in the Confession of our Faith which you mislike, I would be glad to know it, that upon the advertisement it may rather be changed (if the matter will so permit), or at least in some thing qualified, to the contentation of those who otherways might be offended."<sup>1</sup> The Confession, however, was a difficult work to recast; it hung together with logical tenacity; if one brick was dislodged, the whole structure might be imperilled. Granting the fundamental assumption of its compilers, there was no road by which the conclusion at which they arrived—"And therefore we utterly abhor the blasphemy of them that affirm that men who live according to equitie and justice shall be saved"<sup>2</sup>—could be avoided. The Scottish Pharisee who held that he was not as other men—"we are the only part of your people that truly fear God"<sup>3</sup>—was proud of his isolation.

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 13th September 1560.

<sup>2</sup> "Henry Balnares, in his book upon Justification, affirms, That the justification spoken of by St James is different from that spoken of by St Paul; for the justification by good works which St James speaks of only justifies us be-

fore men; but the justification which St Paul speaks of justifies us before God. And that all, yea the best of our good works, are but sins before God."—Mackenzie's *Writers of the Scottish Nation*, iii. 147.

<sup>3</sup> Supplication of July 1565. —Keith, iii. 113.

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“As touching the doctrine taught by our ministers, and as touching the administration of Sacraments used in our churches, we are bold to affirm that there is no realm this day upon the face of the earth, that hath them in greater purity;—yea (we mon speak the truth whomsoever we offend), there is none that hath them in the like purity. For all others retain in their churches, and the ministers thereof, some foot-steps of Antichrist and some dregs of Papistrie; but we have no thing within our churches that ever flowed from that Man of Sin.”<sup>1</sup> *They*, at least, had made no pact with Satan; in Scotland, if nowhere else, “Christ’s religion had been established *de novo*.”<sup>2</sup> In the remarkable letter addressed in December 1566 on behalf of the General Assembly to the bishops and pastors of the Church of England, Knox (who was the penman) tried hard to be civil, if not friendly; but, by the time he had finished, the English bishops and pastors had been roundly told that they still flaunted in “Romish rags.” “If these have been the badges of idolaters in the very act of their idolatry, what hath the preacher of Christian liberty, and open rebuker of all superstition, to do with the dregs of that Romish beast?—yea, what is he that ought not

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 264.

| <sup>2</sup> Keith, iii. 91.

to fear, either to take in his hand or his forehead the print and mark of that odious beast?" "All that are in civil authority," he continued in his characteristic vein, "have not the light of God shining before their eyes in their statutes and commandments, but their affections savour over much of the earth and of worldly wisdom; and therefore we think you should boldly opone yourself not only to all that power that will or daur extol the self against God, but also against all such as daur burthen the consciences of the faithful, further than God hath burthened them by his own word."<sup>1</sup> This characteristic epistle throws considerable light upon Knox's tactics. In England, where the Puritans were still few in number, the Reformer was content to plead for toleration: "Ye cannot be ignorant how tender a thing the conscience of man is;" but the moment the Border was crossed, dissent, however conscientious, was to be rigidly repressed. When the people of God were in a minority, it was the duty and privilege of the idolatrous ruler to respect the principle of religious liberty; but whenever the people of God were in a majority they were bound to execute God's justice against the idolater. Who, then, were the people of God? Knox had no diffi-

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, ii. 332.

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culty in answering the question,—The Church of Scotland was pure; all others had some “footsteps of Antichrist and some dregs of Papistrie.” The letter to the Church of England was an official document, in which a show of courtesy was preserved; the true feeling of the preachers was perhaps more nearly expressed in that letter of Goodman to Cecil, in which he exhorts him to abolish “all the relics of superstition and idolatry, which, to the grief of the godly, are still retained in England, and not to suffer the bloody Bishops and known murderers of God’s people to live, on whom God hath expressly pronounced the sentence of death, for the execution of which He hath committed the sword into your hands.”<sup>1</sup>

Any compromise between the prophet who had been admitted, as he believed, to the most intimate counsels of the Eternal, and the Papist, the Prelatist, and the Anabaptist, was not to be expected; but for several years after Mary’s return, Knox did not represent the governing power in Scotland. Moray had been won over by Maitland, and the proclamation of 25th August 1561 was the official declaration of the policy which they had resolved to adopt. The significance of a declaration which was bitterly resented by

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<sup>1</sup> Goodman to Cecil, October 26, 1559.



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Knox and the extreme Calvinistic faction, has not been sufficiently appreciated, and its language deserves careful study. Recognising the great inconvenience that might arise through the division and difference in matters of religion which her Majesty is most desirous to pacify by "ane good ordour" to the honour of God and the tranquillity of her realm, and "means to take the same by advice of her Estates as soon as conveniently may be," it enjoined all good citizens (in the meantime until the Estates of the realm may be assembled, and her Majesty has taken a final order by their advice and public consent, which her Majesty hopes shall be *to the contentment of the whole nation*) to make no alteration or innovation of the form of religion "publicly and universallie standing at her Majesty's arrival."<sup>1</sup> This proclamation, which was more than once repeated during Mary's reign, was the provisional charter of Protestantism in Scotland. The leaders of the moderate party did not desire any more explicit declaration; and, in spite of the urgency of the Kirk, declined to move on the line of further definition. The indisposition of the lay lords of the Congregation was attributed by the preachers to a selfish regard for their own convenience: Moray, for in-

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<sup>1</sup> Register of the Privy Council, i. 266.

stance, would not support the proposal, because he was waiting for the parliamentary ratification of his earldom.<sup>1</sup> But, if I am not mistaken, the delay is mainly attributable to Maitland's resolve that when the time for union with England arrived, union should not be rendered more difficult by any legislative impediments. If peace with Elizabeth and the English Church could only be concluded on a broader and more Catholic basis than the Confession of Faith supplied, the Confession of Faith, as the act of a convention which had neither been duly summoned nor legally constituted, could be quietly set aside.<sup>2</sup>

2. This explanation of Maitland's attitude is confirmed, I think, by the extreme anxiety which he manifested to bring about an interview between Elizabeth and Mary. Many subjects, other than religion, as we shall see in the next chapter, would

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<sup>1</sup> "The Earldom of Murray needed confirmation, and many things were to be ratified that concerned the help of friends and servants; and therefore they might not urge the Queen, for if they did so, she might hold no Parliament; and what then would become of them that had melled with the slaughter of the Earl of Huntly? Let that Parliament pass over, and when the Queen asked anything of the nobility, as she must do

before her marriage, then should the religion be the first thing to be established."—Knox, ii. 381.

<sup>2</sup> The Proclamation certainly seems to imply that, in the opinion of its framers, the Acts of the Parliament of 1560 had not the force of law. The proceedings of the Assembly in 1564, and the modification of the "Articles" suggested by Maitland, are in accordance with this view.—Keith, iii. 91.

have come to be discussed at their meeting; but the resolution of "the religious difficulty" would have been among the earliest. It was obvious to Maitland that unless some basis of reconciliation could be found, Mary's position must become critical, if not untenable. A Catholic queen among a people obstinately Protestant had an arduous enough part to play; but a Catholic queen in Scotland and a Protestant queen in England was a political embarrassment which, as Europe then stood, would not admit of amicable adjustment. Maitland from an early date had appreciated the difficulties of the situation; and when, on Elizabeth's rejection of Arran, the nation as one man went over to Mary, he continued to maintain that a cordial union with England was the only admissible solution. The scene in the Council Chamber on that occasion has been vividly described by Randolph. The Secretary stood almost alone. "If ever at any time the Lord of Lethington did show the excellence of his wit, his love to his country, his affection and goodwill towards us, he did that day in them all more than could be thought to be in any one man."<sup>1</sup> When on Mary's return Maitland became her minister, it is plain that he was still firmly convinced that a

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 6th February 1561.

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close alliance with England, a perfect understanding with Elizabeth, was the one safe and practicable policy. Of this policy Mary appears entirely to have approved. She put herself in his hands; he became "the whole guider of her affairs." "His advice is followed more than any others."<sup>1</sup> We must remember, therefore, when we read the letters in which he expresses the utmost confidence that were the Queens to meet a religious accord might be brought about, that Lethington was at the time the Queen's most intimate and trusted adviser. If any one in Scotland knew what Mary's real sentiments were, Maitland did. Nor was he singular in his confidence,—the wary Randolph, for instance, was quite as sanguine of a successful issue. Cecil's envoy employs the Puritanic phraseology of his faction, but his meaning is clear enough. "Your Grace shall know by the Lord of Ledington sent unto your Majesty from the Queen's Grace his sovereign, her Grace's mind more amply than ever I spake of it or can now write. By whom I am also required to signify unto your Majesty the continuance of her goodwill, the desire she hath to see your Majesty, how loth she would be that your two Majesties should not come unto the perfect point of your

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 6th February and 13th December 1563.

desires to live in perpetual peace and amity. The ways and means thereunto shall be opened unto your Majesty at this present [that is, by Lethington]. The desire of all godly thereunto is such as without that they see no way to a happy or contented life. The hope they have that your Majesty shall be the instrument to convert their sovereign to Christ and knowledge of His true Word, causeth them to wish above measure that your Majesties may see the one the other.”<sup>1</sup> Both Maitland and Randolph were men who, in such ticklish negotiations, were constitutionally cautious; and Maitland, moreover, was decidedly of opinion that the meeting, if it led to no settlement, would be worse than useless; failing to remove, it would increase the unkindness. But he appears to have had no doubt that by judicious address a religious accord could be brought about. “The Queen my mistress doth so gently behave herself in every behalf as reasonably we can require. If anything be amiss, the fault is rather in ourselves. You know the vehemency of Mr Knox’s spirit, which cannot be bridled, and yet doth some-

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Elizabeth, 26th May 1562. See also his letter of 7th December 1561, in which he says that Lethington and the Lord James are of opinion that Mary “will never come to God before the Queen’s Majesty draw her,” and that the clamour of people and preachers will have no effect upon her.

times utter such sentences as cannot be digested by a weak stomach. I would wish he would deal with her more gently, being a young princess unpersuaded. For this I am accounted to be too politic; but surely, in her comporting with him, she doth declare a wisdom far exceeding her age. God grant her the assistance of His spirit. Surely I see in her a good towardness, and think that the Queen your sovereign shall be able to do much with her in religion if they once enter in a good familiarity.”<sup>1</sup> Nor, when weighing the evidence, is it unimportant to notice that the mere suspicion that Mary might be won over to Anglicanism infuriated Knox. “The little bruit,” Randolph wrote, “that hath been here of late, that the Queen is advised by the Cardinal to embrace the religion of England, maketh them now almost wild—of the which (religion) they both say and preach that it is little better than when it was at the worst. I have not so amply conferred with Mr Knox on these matters as shortly I must, who upon Sunday last gave the cross and the candle such a wipe, that as wise and learned as himself wished him to have held his peace.”<sup>2</sup>

It may be argued indeed that it was extremely unlikely that Mary would desert the faith in

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 25th October 1561.

<sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 12th February 1562.

which she was educated, and to which she was passionately attached. It is true that at a later period, as was natural, and indeed inevitable, her fidelity to the Catholic Church became a proverb. The world had been very hard to her; yet when the rest of the world had deserted her, the Catholic Church had remained true. She had been bitterly persecuted, and persecution bore its usual fruit. She was driven into an ardour of piety alike by gratitude and resentment. But the evidence that she was an ardent or scrupulous Catholic when she first came to Scotland is very meagre. "The Queen," Throckmorton wrote soon after her arrival, "quietly tolerates the Reformed religion, who is thought to be no more devout towards Rome than for the contentation of her uncles." This was the common impression; and it appears to have been well grounded. Men like Maitland and Randolph and Throckmorton were not easily misled; yet these acute observers appear to have entertained no doubt that Mary's courteous bearing to the dignitaries of her Church, and consistent defence of the rights of her co-religionists, did not imply any fanatical attachment to the doctrine or ceremonies of Rome. She may have deceived them, of course; but the charge of inveterate bad faith, so far as I am able to form an opinion, cannot be substantiated. In all her contro-

versies with Knox she was perilously outspoken. No doubt he tried her patience severely; and, irritated by his confident pertinacity and arrogant masterfulness, she may have said more than she meant to say—more than she said to Maitland or Randolph. It was natural, indeed, that a woman whose relations were mainly Catholic should be reluctant to separate herself from them. She desired, of course, to stand well with her uncles and with France. She needed allies; yet in the confused political state of Europe it might chance, should she incur their displeasure, that she would find herself without a friend. The Catholic conspiracies in which she was said to have engaged were the inventions or exaggerations of a fanatical faction. The visit of a Catholic priest was magnified into treason to “true religion.”<sup>1</sup> Unless she joined the Catholic league (of which there is absolutely no proof), it cannot be fairly said that during her stay in Scotland she was implicated in any plot against Protestantism.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, it was very commonly believed

<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, August 1, 1562. Randolph says that Lethington had positively assured him of his certain knowledge that the messenger from the Pope who had come to learn if Mary would send a representative to the Council

of Trent “shall return in vain.”

<sup>2</sup> Randolph’s letter of 7th February 1566 (in which he says that Mary had signed the Catholic Bond) is contradicted by Bedford’s letter of February 14.



that even her uncles (Elizabeth's friendship being once assured) were willing that she should join the Anglican Church;<sup>1</sup> and upon the whole, it rather appears that, but for the implacable animosity of the Calvinistic preachers, Maitland's scheme of a religious peace might have succeeded—with incalculable advantage, it need not be added, to either nation.

3. In Maitland's letter of 25th October 1561, the earliest intimation of his dissatisfaction with the conduct of the extreme Protestant faction in their treatment of Mary is to be found. Knox had resolved that, so far as in him lay, the policy of moderation, of conciliation, should be defeated. There could be no truce between the idolater and the people of God, between "the Roman harlot" and "the immaculate Spouse of Christ."<sup>2</sup> At whatever cost, Mary should learn the truth. On the Sunday following her return, she heard in the courtyard of the palace the gentlemen of Fife, with the Master of Lindsay at their head, clamouring against the Mass. Not only was the Queen to be deprived of the most solemn sacrament of her Church, but the persons who celebrated it were to be punished according to God's law. "The idolater priest should die the death." Knox passionately declared from

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph's letters to Cecil, | 1562.  
January 30 and February 12, | <sup>2</sup> Calderwood, i. 228.

the pulpit of St Giles', that one Mass was more fearful to him than "ten thousand armed enemies landed in any part of the realm." Arran protested against the proclamation of the 25th August, on the ground that it might protect the Queen's Popish servants who went to Mass against the penalties attaching to idolatry,—a protection which ought not to be afforded, he continued, "na mair nor gif they commit slauchter or murder, seeing that the one is meikle mair abominable and odious in the sight of God than is the others." A peculiar and ponderous vein of pleasantry characterised the entertainments provided for Mary by the Council when she entered the capital in state. Maitland was away—at Westminster on a mission to Elizabeth; and the civic authorities appear to have taken advantage of his absence to introduce some humorous interludes of which the Secretary of State might possibly have disapproved. "Upon Tuesday last she made her entry. She dined in the Castle.<sup>1</sup> The first sight that she saw after

<sup>1</sup> In going from Holyrood to the Castle she had avoided the High Street. "Her Highness departit from Holyroodhouse, and raid by the lang gait on the north side of the said burgh, unto the time she come to the Castle, where was an yet made

for her, at the quhilk she come in and rode up the Castle bank to the Castle, and dined therein."—*Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 67. The "Lang Gait" must have skirted the margin of the Nor' Loch.

she came out of the Castle was a boy of six years of age, that came, as it were, from heaven out of a round globe, that presented unto her a Bible and Psalter, and the keys of the gate. There, for the terrible signification of the vengeance of God upon idolatry, were burnt Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, in the time of the sacrifice. They were minded to have had a priest burned at the altar at the elevation ; the Earl of Huntly stayed that pageant.”<sup>1</sup> When, a few days afterwards, Mary went to Perth and St Andrews, a candle standing at her bedside set fire to the curtain.<sup>2</sup> It was the judgment of God ; she had attended the Popish service in her progress, or, as the Reformers phrased it, “all which parts she polluted with her idolatry ;” and this was the appropriate punishment. “Fire followed her very commonlie in that journey.”<sup>3</sup> On her return to Edinburgh, she found that the magistrates had issued a proclamation by which drunkards, adulterers, *Catholic priests*, and other improper characters were banished from the town. “The Queen was very commovit” at the tenor of the order, and caused the provost and bailies to be removed from office. Knox’s indignation at the high-handed action of the Court was unbounded. Yet no redress was to be had,

<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, September 7, 1561.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, September 24, 1561.

<sup>3</sup> Knox, ii. 287.

“unless we would arm the hands of the people in whom abideth yet some spark of his fear;” for even the Protestant nobles were ready to humour the Queen; “the permission of that odious idol the Mass, by such as have professed themselves enemies to the same, doth hourly threaten a sudden plague.”<sup>1</sup> Lethington and the Lord James were mainly responsible for the backsliding of the nobility,—“the whole blame lieth upon *their* necks.”<sup>2</sup> The counsels of “politick heads” were scouted; the courtiers were told by the preachers that they had begun again “to shake hands with the devill;” Maitland was “the father of all mischief;” and a storm of boisterous ridicule was directed against “him that hes the honor to be the Queen’s brother.” Idolatry, they declared, was never more prevalent in the realm. “And yet who guides the Queen and the Court? who but the Protestants? O horrible slanderers of God and of His holy Gospel! Better it were unto you plainly to renounce Jesus Christ than thus to mock His blessed Evangel.”<sup>3</sup>

A sermon by Knox was not unfrequently a great political event. His harsh sense was in the highest bursts of his oratory curiously blended

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<sup>1</sup> Knox to Mrs Anna Locke, October 2, 1561.

<sup>2</sup> Knox to Cecil, October 7, 1561.

<sup>3</sup> Knox, ii. 362.

with an emotional, if not imaginative, fervour, which appealed powerfully to the people. The sturdy and somewhat stolid envoy of Elizabeth bears emphatic testimony to its amazing force. "Where your honour exhorteth us to stoutness, I assure you the voice of one man is able in one hour to put more life in us than five hundred trumpets continually blustering in our ears."<sup>1</sup> But, after Mary's return, the Reformer's "thundering sermons" seem to have had less effect upon his hearers; the arrogance of his bearing, the violence of his invective, rejoiced his enemies and disturbed his friends. The Queen, on the other hand, was studiously moderate. She pled for liberty of conscience, and liberty only; and the nation began to recognise that the plea was not unreasonable. The picture of Mary struggling somewhat feebly and blindly on behalf of the principles of religious liberty against the stormy and insistent invective of the Reformer, has, it must be confessed, its touch of pathos and its touch of humour. "Mr Knox spake upon Tuesday to the Queen. He knocked so hastily upon her heart that he made her weep, as well you know there be of that sex that will do that as well for anger as for grief."<sup>2</sup>

This was their first interview; and at this and

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil September 7, 1561.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

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subsequent meetings Knox found, to his surprise, that the Queen's spirit, in spite of her tears, was as little craven as his own. "If there be not in her a proud mind, a crafty wit, and ane indurat heart against God and His truth, my judgment faileth me."<sup>1</sup> Whether he was right or wrong in his estimate of her character, he took care to inform her that the 'First Blast of the Trumpet' had been primarily directed against the wicked Jezebel of England, and that personally he was prepared to recognise her authority, and to obey her commands in whatever was lawful,— "as weill content to live under your Grace, as Paul was to live under Nero,"— a somewhat equivocal compliment. But temporal rulers, he continued, were bound to submit themselves to the rule of the Church. Mary interrupted him. Which Church did he mean? "For my part," she said, "I think the Kirk of Rome to be the true Kirk." "Your will is no reason," Knox replied; "nor will your judgment make that Roman harlot the true spouse of Christ." "My conscience," said Mary, "persuadeth me not so." "Conscience!" exclaimed Knox, "conscience requireth knowledge, which I fear ye want." "I have both heard and read," said Mary. "So did

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 286. See also | 1566.—Hatfield Calendar, 262.  
his letter to Cecil, October 7, |

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the Jews," was the reply,—“the Jews who crucified Christ.” “You interpret Scripture,” Mary retorted, “after one manner, the Pope and cardinals after another; whom shall I believe, or who shall be judge?” “Ye shall believe God,” Knox replied, “that plainly speaketh in His Word; and further than the Word teaches you, ye neither shall believe the one nor the other. The Word of God is plain; and if there appear any obscurity in one place, the Holy Ghost, which is never contrarious to Himself, explains the same more clearly in other places; so that there can remain no doubt but unto such as obstinately remain ignorant.”<sup>1</sup>

A sermon directed against the Queen's dancing was the occasion of the second interview. The most innocent sports were denounced by the Reformers; yet it was with difficulty that the affections of “the rascal multitude” were diverted from their Robin Hoods and Little Johns, their Abbots of Unreason and Queens of May; and it needed half a century of Calvinistic rule to reconcile the mass of the people to a prohibition which had been, from the first, the cause of constant heartburning. The Queen's dancing, as we have seen, did not escape their censure. “In

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<sup>1</sup> Condensed from Knox, ii. | believe, who still hold that  
277-86, and Calderwood, ii. | Knox's reasoning is satisfac-  
148-53. There are persons, I | tory.

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presence of the Council, she kept herself very grave; but how soon that ever her French fiddlers, fiddlers, and others of that band got the house alone, there might be seen skipping not very comely for honest women.”<sup>1</sup> But the dancing in which Mary indulged during the early days of December 1562 was particularly reprehensible. “She danced excessively till after midnight, because that she had received letters that persecution was again begun in France.”<sup>2</sup> So taking for his text, “And now understand, O ye kings, and be learned, ye that judge the earth,” Knox began to tax, as he admits, “the ignorance, vanity, and despite of princes against all virtue.” Next morning Mary sent for her censor, and inquired if it was true, as she had been informed, that he had travelled to bring her into the contempt of her people. Knox denied that he had done so; the Queen had been misinformed: he had merely said that rulers who danced as the Philistines danced would receive the reward of dancers, “and *that* will be drunk in hell; for God will not always afflict His people, neither yet will He always wink at the tyranny of tyrants. If any man, madam,” he continued, “will say that I spack mair, let him presently accuse me.” Mary naturally enough replied that the words as re-

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 294.

| <sup>2</sup> Ibid., ii. 330.



ported by himself were "sharp eneuch," but did not press him further.<sup>1</sup>

They met again at Lochleven Castle in 1563. Mary had failed, he contended, to put in force the laws against the celebration of the Mass; and when rulers failed to use the sword of justice against idolaters, the right of their subjects to take it in hand themselves could not be gainsaid. "The examples are evident; for Samuel feared not to slay Agag, the fat and delicate king of Amaleck, whom King Saul had saved; neither spared Elias Jesabel's false prophets, and Baal's priests, albeit that King Achab was present." Mary, after a few more Old Testament precedents illustrative of Jewish justice had been produced, adroitly contrived to turn the conversation to other subjects,—Alexander Gordon, Ruthven, Lethington, the Argylls. Ruthven, she complained, had been lately placed on the Privy Council, and Ruthven she cordially disliked. "Whom doth your Majesty blame?" Knox asked. "Lethington," she answered. But Maitland was in France at the time, and Knox not ungenerously declined to assail his absent rival. "That man is absent for the present, madam, and therefore will I say nocht against him."<sup>2</sup> Knox appears to have

<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 333.

<sup>2</sup> Mary's dislike of Ruthven is alluded to in Randolph's

letter to Cecil, June 3, 1563.

"The Queen cannot abide him, and all men hate him."

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lodged at Kinross ; for the conversation which had been carried on in the Castle the night before, was resumed next morning on the Hawking hill to the west of the town,—where her attendants with horse and hawk and hound were waiting the signal to start.

As time wore on the irritation increased. Moray, the Master of Maxwell, all those of the lay lords, except Glencairn, who had been the pillars of the infant Church, one by one deserted Knox, and went over to the faction that Maitland led. The insolent personalities in which the preachers indulged were more than the nobles could stomach. The “supplications” of the General Assemblies had become thinly veiled incitements to sedition. The Queen must put away “that idol and bastard service of God, the Messe,” “as well from herself as from all others within this realm ;” and she was plainly told that, although nothing was more odious to them than tumults and domestic discord, yet would they attempt the uttermost before they beheld with their own eyes the house of God demolished, “quhilk with travail and danger God hath within this realm erected by us.” If redress was not speedily afforded, they were assured that God’s hand would not long spare in His anger “to strike the head and the tail ; the inobedient

prince and the sinful people." Lethington, among others, having taken exception to the form as well as the substance of the address ("For who ever saw it written to a prince that God would strike the head and the tail?"), Knox promptly rejoined, "that the prophet Esaias used such manner of speaking; and there was no doubt he was weill acquainted in the Court; for it was supposed he was of the king's stock." His answer to the suggestion that a complaint might be preferred against any person who was guilty of a contravention of the law, was happier and more pointed. The sheep, he said, might as well complain to the wolf. "If the sheep shall complain to the wolf that the wolves and whelps has devoured their lambs, the complainer may stand in danger; but the offender, we feare, shall have liberty to hunt after the prey." Lethington, it is added, considered such comparisons—the Queen having shown no desire or inclination to establish Papistry—"veray unsaverie"; and the Assembly appear to have agreed with him; for the supplication, Knox adds, "was given to be reformed as Lethington's wisdom thought best. And in very deed he framed it so, that when it was delivered, and she had read somewhat of it, she said, 'Here are many fair words; I cannot tell what the hearts are.' And so, for our paint-

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ed oratory, we were termed the next name to flatterers and dissemblers.”<sup>1</sup>

The Queen's growing popularity with her subjects was wormwood to Knox. While the preachers were everywhere denounced as “railers,” Mary's conciliatory policy was as widely approved. When she opened the Parliament of 1563, she received, as she rode from Holyrood to the Tolbooth, an enthusiastic welcome from the citizens of the capital. “Such stinking pride of women as was seen at that Parliament, was never seen before in Scotland. Three sundry days the Queen rode to the Tolbooth. The first day she made a painted oration ; and there might have been heard among her flatterers, ‘Vox Dianæ! The voice of a goddess and not of a woman! God save that sweet face! Was there ever orator spak so properlie and so sweetly?’” To flatter a woman, and that woman a queen and a Catholic, was a dire offence in Knox's eyes ; and he took a characteristic revenge by abusing the fashion of her petticoats. “All things misliking the preachers,” we are told, “they spak boldly against *the tarjetting of their tails*”—some mysterious device of the feminine toilet—which, they expected, would “provoke God's vengeance not only against those foolish women,

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 338-45 ; Calderwood, ii. 187.

but against the whole realm which allowed such odious abusing of things that might have been better bestowed.”<sup>1</sup> Mary, as we know, was being wooed by France, Austria, and Spain; and before the Parliament adjourned, Knox delivered a rousing discourse against her marriage with an infidel. “Whensoever,” he declared, “the nobility of Scotland, professing the Lord Jesus, consents that an infidel (and all Papists are infidels) shall be head to your sovereign, ye do as far as in ye lieth to banish Christ Jesus from this realm.” Mary was very indignant, and Protestant and Catholic alike were offended, —“this manner of speaking being judged intolerable.” Knox was again summoned to the palace, where the Queen, moved to tears, reproached him for his harshness. But the sturdy divine, who had looked many angry men in the face, as he said, “without being afraid beyond measure,” was nothing abashed. “When it shall please God,” he told the Queen, “to deliver you from that bondage of darkness and error in the which you have been nourished, your Majesty will find the liberty of my tongue nothing offensive.”

These and the like scenes were not calculated to lessen the friction between the courtiers and

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 381.

the preachers, between Maitland and Knox. Knox was implacable, and no entreaties, no considerations of policy or expediency, would induce him to moderate the vehemence of his "railings," or the directness of his "applications." It was after one of these characteristic outbursts that Lethington, we are told, "in open audience gave himself unto the devill" if ever from that day he should regard what became of the ministers. "And let them bark and blaw," he added, "as loud as they list." The breach between the two factions was complete. Knox thundered against the Protestant apostates; while Maitland's mocking retort, "we must recant and burn our Bill, for the preachers are angry," added fuel to the flame. We need not wonder that a politic statesman who had all along been anxiously working for concord should have been bitterly mortified by what he must have regarded as gross and criminal indiscretion; but it was not until he had convinced himself that Knox was irreconcilable, and that it was impossible on any terms to win him to a happier and less combative mood, that he gave unrestrained expression to his displeasure. "The Secretar burst out in a piece of his choler."

One more attempt was made by the ecclesiastical courts, before the Darnley marriage, to deprive Mary of her Mass. The General Assem-

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bly in the summer of 1565 presented a petition to her requiring that "the Papistical and blasphemous Mass" "be universally suppressed and abolished throughout the realm, not only in the subjects but also in the Queen's Majesty's own person." Mary returned a dignified answer. She could not forsake the religion in which she had been brought up, and which she believed to be well grounded,—“beseeching all her loving subjects (seeing that they have had experience of her goodness, that she neither hath in times by-past, nor yet meaneth hereafter, to press the conscience of any man, but to suffer them to worship God in such sort as they are persuaded to be best), that they will not press her to offend her own conscience.”<sup>1</sup> To Mary's ill-timed and premature plea for toleration (as such we are now taught to regard it by men who are clamorous for religious equality), Knox, from the pulpit of St Giles', replied with characteristic vigour and promptitude. Darnley had come to hear the sermon in the Protestant sanctuary on Sunday, 19th August,—three weeks after he was married. The text was taken from Isaiah: "O Lord our God, other lords than Thou have ruled over us;" and the appropriate application was duly made. God had given the government of

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, ii. 295.

the realm to "boys and women" to rebuke the people for their iniquity and ingratitude; and if order was not taken with "that harlot Jesabel," the vials of the divine wrath would be emptied upon the land. Knox had become so used to strong language, as the opium-eater becomes used to an immoderate quantity of his drug, that he failed to appreciate its effect upon persons who were unfamiliar with his uncourtly candour. It may have been the language, or it may have been the length, of the sermon; but Darnley at any rate, we are told, was profoundly annoyed. The author of the 'Diurnal of Occurrents' says only,—“Whereat the king was crabbit;” but Knox's own version supplies some amusing details. “And because he had tarried an hour and more longer than the time appointed, the king, sitting in a throne made for the occasion, was so moved at this sermon that he would not dine; and being troubled, with great fury, he passed in the afternoon to the hawking.”

The vehemence of Knox, however, must not be confounded, as it has sometimes been, with deliberate rudeness or boorish disrespect; an entire absence of sound judgment, charity, and tact is the worst that can be laid to his charge. His missionary zeal was untempered by apostolic discretion. Yet the effect was the same,—had he desired to confirm Mary in her mistaken



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opinions, he could not have followed a more successful method than he adopted. We must remember, however, that the phrase "mistaken opinions," as used by us, was incomprehensible to Knox. The Mass was idolatry, idolatry was *crime*, and the people and rulers who refused to inflict the punishments which God had attached to crime, would themselves be punished. "In the northland where the autumn before the Queen had travelled, there was an extreme famine, in the quhilk many died in that country. The dearth was great over all, but the famine was principally there. And so all things appertaining to the sustentation of man, in triple and more, exceeded their accustomed prices. And so did God, according to the threatening of His law, punish the idolatry of our wicked Queen. For the riotous feasting and excessive banquetting wheresoever that wicked woman repaired, provoked God to strike the staff of bread, and to give His malediction upon the fruits of the earth."<sup>1</sup> "God from heaven and upon the face of the earth gave declaration that He was offended at the iniquity that was committed even within this realm; for upon the 20th day of Januare there fell weit in great abundance, quhilk in the falling freizit so vehemently that the earth was

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 367.

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but a sheet of ice. And in that same month the sea stood still, and neither flowed nor ebbit the space of 24 hours. These things were not only observed," Knox adds, "but also spoken and constantly affirmed by men of judgment and credit."<sup>1</sup> The effect of this fantastical fanaticism upon a proud and high-spirited woman may be easily guessed. Knox was the foremost of the Reformers; yet Mary had found that Knox was narrow-minded, superstitious, and fiercely intolerant,—so narrow-minded, intolerant, and superstitious that he had no difficulty in believing that the orderly course of nature was interrupted because the Queen dined on wild fowl and danced till midnight. If this was Protestantism, she would have none of it. Nor can we blame her much. The ecclesiastical dictator at Edinburgh was as violent and irrational (it might well appear to her) as the ecclesiastical dictator at Rome. Was it worth her while to exchange the infallible Pope of the Vatican for the infallible Pope of the High Street?

4. In a theocratic society the Church and the State are one; and the prophet of the Israelitish records is a lawgiver, a magistrate, and a politician, as well as a preacher. Knox's notions of government were taken from the Old Testament.

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 417.

Maitland, on the other hand, was a secular statesman, who steadily resisted the intrusion of the Church into civil affairs. We have already had a sample of the wares in Knox's wallet; and the briefest narrative of his controversies with Maitland will serve to show that the Hebrew prophet is an unmanageable element in modern society, and that the application of the principles which Knox asserted and Maitland resisted must lead directly to anarchy.

We have seen that from the day the new religious society was instituted Maitland openly opposed the inordinate pretensions of the preachers. He had said "in mockage," when Knox's special and vehement application of the prophet Haggai was being addressed to the Parliament of 1560, "We mon now forget ourselves, and beir the barrow to build the houses of God." He had declared again—with his usual verbal felicity—that the Book of Discipline was "a devout imagination,"—meaning probably that such a code of exact and salutary discipline might suit the Civitas Dei when it came to be established, but was ill adapted for any existing society. Knox was anxious that the treatise should be ratified by the Estates; Maitland, on the other hand, was resolved that no parliamentary sanction should be given. It had been signed informally in 1560, Knox being urgent, by some of the

lords of the Congregation ; but it would appear that later on they had come to be of opinion that they had acted unadvisedly ; and Lethington's plea, addressed to the members of the Assembly of 1561, that subscription had been a formal act, which meant little or nothing—"many subscribed *in fide parentum*, as the bairns are baptised"—seems to have satisfied most of the lords who were present. "How many of those that signed that book would be subject to it?" he inquired, with significant emphasis. The answer was, "All the godly." "Will the Duke?" (Lethington had been apprised, no doubt, that the Hamiltons were now unfriendly.) "If he will not," Lord Ochiltree replied, "I would that he was scrapped out, not only of that book, but also out of our number and company." But Ochiltree appears to have had no support among the "worldlings," and after an angry speech from Knox, Lethington told him plainly that the discussion need not be protracted ; "Stand content, that book will not be obtained."

The penalties against Popery were, as we have seen, extraordinarily harsh. The Catholics had looked forward to Mary's return, hoping that with her help the severity of the Acts might be relaxed ; but they were disappointed. We learn from one of Maitland's earlier letters that the

penal statutes had been rigorously enforced, and that in point of fact the Popish priests were in worse plight than before.<sup>1</sup> Maitland, for reasons to which I have already adverted, was distinctly in favour of a lenient administration of the law, and we find the Reformers complaining on more than one occasion that the Secretary was not a keen persecutor. Knox, alluding to a prosecution which was begun when Maitland was in France, observes that the Queen asked counsel of the old Laird of Lethington, "for the younger was absent, and so the Protestants had the fewer unfriends;" and it is quite true that during the latter years of the Lethington administration the penalties inflicted upon those who adhered to the ancient faith were comparatively light. On the other hand, he regarded the seditious doctrines which were aired in the pulpit of St Giles' with marked disfavour. The preachers declared that they held a civil as well as a divine commission, a secular as well as a spiritual warrant. They were above the law when the law was in their judgment unjust. They prayed for the Queen as "a thrall and bondwoman of Satan," and for the rebel lords as "the best part of the nobility." A religious festival not uncommonly developed into a political saturnalia. The first public fast

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 15th January 1562.

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of the Reformed Church was held during the week for which Rizzio's murder had been planned; and in the form of prayer prepared by Knox for the occasion, his knowledge of the plot enabled him to exercise his prophetic gifts with marked advantage. When, after a tumult in Edinburgh, the lawless citizens were warned not to take the law into their own hands, the Reformer protested against the "high threatenings" and offensive language of the Royal letter. Knox's defiance of authority has been defended by indiscreet apologists; but Maitland's reply to the argument that the godly might break with impunity any law they disliked appears to be unanswerable. "For if all private persons should usurp to take vengeance at their own hands, what lies in ours? And to what purpose hath good laws and statutes been established?"<sup>1</sup>

An accidental outburst of fanaticism in the Abbey Church during the Queen's absence at Stirling in 1563 brought the contention between the extreme and moderate parties to a crisis. The Calvinistic rioters were identified, and two of their number were summoned to underlie the law. Knox promptly called his faction to arms. The trial was to take place on the 25th of October, and early in the month the Fiery Cross, in

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<sup>1</sup> The Queen's Letter of 24th April 1565.

the form of an Encyclical from the Calvinistic leader, was speeding through the Covenanting counties. "Wheresoever two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of thame," was the superscription of this singular declaration of war, in which the writer craved the Congregation to convene in Edinburgh on the day of trial, "for the advancement of God's glory, the safety of your brethren, and your own assurance." It was an insolent attempt to overawe the Judges by collecting in the capital a mob of Protestant fanatics. "The brethren prepared themselves, as many as were thought expedient in every town and province, to keep the day." A civil war was in prospect; but the tenor of the letter was made known to the Queen, and Knox was called before the Council.

The Reformer was urged, both by Moray and by Maxwell, to withdraw the obnoxious circular, but he obstinately refused. He had been guilty of no offence. "No offence!" exclaimed Maxwell, "to convocat the Queen's lieges!" "Not for a just cause," Knox replied, vindicating his conduct by the example of the lords of the Congregation, who two years before had risen in arms against their sovereign. Maxwell was answering reasonably enough that, times having changed, the precedent was inapplicable, when he was interrupted by Knox: "It is neither the

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presence nor the absence of the Queen," he said, "that rules my conscience, but God speaking plainly in His Word; what was lawful to me last year is still lawful, because my God is unchangeable." What could a Maitland or a Maxwell make of this impracticable controversialist, —a controversialist whose ultimate court of appeal was the Old Testament narrative as interpreted by himself?

Knox, however, was ultimately discharged by the Council. The Queen was present on the occasion,—Maxwell on one side of her chair of state, Maitland on the other. The Council was composed exclusively of the lords who had belonged to the Congregation,—Moray, Marischal, Glencairn, Ruthven. Behind the lords, at a little distance from the table, sat, among others, "auld Lethington, father of the Secretar." The examination was mainly conducted by Maitland, who had no difficulty in disposing of the pleas that were urged by Knox and his partisans. The precedent of the convocations which had been held during a period of civil strife was clearly inapplicable: "Then was then, and now is now. We have no need of sic conventions as sometimes we have had." Then the Queen herself interposed: "Who gave him commandment to make convocation of my lieges? Is not that treason?" Ruthven had recourse, in answer, to a trans-

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parent evasion (of which Knox, indeed, had already availed himself); it was not treason, he contended, "for he makes convocation of the people to hear prayer and sermon almost daily, and whatever your Grace may think thereof, we think it not treason." Mary tore the cobweb to pieces. "I say nothing," she retorted, "against your religion or against your convening to your sermons. But what authority have you to convocate my subjects when ye will, without my commandment?" Knox's reply was to the effect that he had acted on the commandment of the Kirk; but the greater part of his defence was devoted to a violent invective against the "pestilent Papists, who, being the sons of the devill, maun obey the desires of their father, who has been ane liar and ane murderer from the beginning."

Knox asserts that Lethington was eager for a conviction, and that the lords were offended by his importunity. "What! shall the Laird of Lethington have power to controul us? or shall the presence of a woman cause us to offend God by condemning the innocent against our conscience?" It rather appears, however, that the prudential considerations (a conviction might possibly have led to a riot) which induced the lords to discharge him did not imply any approval of his conduct; for it is from the time of

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his appearance before the Council that the division between the Court party and the Church party becomes most marked. The Master of Maxwell "gave unto the said John a discharge of the familiaritie which before was great between them;" and even Moray was thereafter for many months divided from the man to whom he had been bound by the closest ties. "In all that time the Earl of Moray was so fremmit to John Knox that neither by word nor write was there any communication betwixt them."

An unsuccessful attempt to bring the two parties together was made during the sitting of the Assembly which met at Edinburgh in June 1564. Lethington presided, Knox was in attendance, and the conference ultimately resolved into an animated discussion between the preacher and the politician. The report comes from Knox, and we may fairly conclude that he does no injustice to his own argument; yet the *reasonableness* of Maitland's position, the fairness of his judgment, and the felicity of his language, are conspicuous throughout. The figures of the representative leaders stand out boldly, and the hopelessness of any compromise between the men is nowhere else more distinctly brought home to us. Knox belonged, heart and soul, to the Church militant of the sixteenth century; whereas Maitland, in his manner of speech and

habit of thought, was essentially modern. A brief *résumé* of this dramatic dialogue will interest the reader.<sup>1</sup>

It must be premised, however, that a conference had been held soon after Mary's return, at which the question, "Whether subjects might put to their hand to suppress the idolatry of their prince?" had been keenly debated. The preachers were prepared to insist on conformity, the lords were in favour of liberty, "and the votes of the lords prevailed against the ministers." It was resolved, however, that the judgment of the Church of Geneva, the mother Church of the more rigid Protestantism, should be obtained. Knox offered to correspond with Calvin; but on the plea (it was only "a shift to gain time," we are told) that "there stood meikle in the information," the Secretary undertook to prepare and forward the memorial.

The conference was held in the "Inner Counsel House." Besides the Duke, Moray, Argyll, Morton, Glencairn, Marischal, Rothes—all those who had been hitherto the steadiest friends of the Church, but who were now dismayed by

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<sup>1</sup> As the report of the conference occupies forty pages of Knox's narrative in Laing's edition (ii. 421-461), my summary of the debate is necessarily of the slightest. I have endeavoured rather to preserve the tone and temper, the characteristic peculiarities of the speakers, than to follow the argument closely.

Knox's violence—were present on behalf of the lords; Erskine of Dun, Spottiswoode, Craig, and others represented the ministers. The debate was opened by Lethington, who, insisting upon the immense importance of a friendly understanding between the sovereign and her people, pointed out that the goodwill which had hitherto been preserved was in danger of being interrupted by the indecent invective and virulent hostility of the preachers. Knox replied that any truce between wicked rulers and the people of God was not to be desired, and that God, in His hot indignation, would strike the people who winked at the idolatry of their prince.

*Lethington.* That is a head, Mr Knox, whereupon you and I have never agreed. How are you able to prove that God has plagued or stricken a people for the idolatry of their prince, if they themselves led godly lives?

*Knox.* The Scripture of God teaches me that Jerusalem and Juda were punished for the sin of Manasses. It is true that the king was not wholly to blame, for idolatry and false religion have ever been and ever will be pleasing to the most part of men; and a great number, no doubt, followed him in his abominations, and suffered him to file Jerusalem and the temple of God; for which sin the whole nation was justly responsible; even as the whole of Scotland is

guilty this day of the Queen's idolatry, and you, my lords, specially above all others.

*Lethington.* Therein we shall never agree; but of that we shall speak more at large hereafter. Now, as regards the form of prayer which you use for the Queen?

*Knox.* God knows that publicly and privately I have prayed for her conversion, showing the people the danger in which they stand by reason of her indurited blindness—<sup>1</sup>

*Lethington.* That is it wherein we find the greatest fault. You call her the slave of Satan; you affirm that God's vengeance hangs over the realm by reason of her impiety,—what is this but to rouse the heart of the people against her Majesty?

*Knox.* It sufficeth me, my lord, that the Master and Teacher of baith prophets and apostles has taught me so to pray.

*Lethington.* Wherein rebels she against God?

*Knox.* In all the actions of her life, but especially that she will not hear the blessed Evangel

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<sup>1</sup> This had been the form adopted by Knox since the Queen's return. At least as early as October 29, 1561. Randolph wrote to Cecil: "Mr Knox's prayer is daily for her, 'That God will turn her obstinate heart against God and His truth; or if the Holy Will be otherwise, to strengthen the hands and hearts of His chosen and elect stoutly to withstand the rage of all tyrants,' in words terrible enough."

of Jesus Christ, and that she maintains that idol, the Messe.

*Lethington.* She thinks it not rebellion, but good religion.

*Knox.* So thought they that sometimes offered their children unto Moloch, and yet the Spirit of God affirms that they offered them unto devills and not unto God.

*Lethington.* Yet why not pray for her without moving any doubt ?

*Knox.* Prayer profits the sons and daughters of God's election only, of which number whether she be ane or not, I have just cause to doubt.

*Lethington.* Well, let us come to the second head. Where find ye that the Scripture calls any the bond-slaves to Satan ? or that the prophets of God speak so irreverently of kings and queens ?

*Knox.* The Scripture says that by nature we are all of the sons of wrath ; now, what difference there is between the sons of wrath and the slaves of the devill, I understand not.

*Lethington.* But where will ye find that any of the prophets did so entreat kings and queens ?

*Knox.* In more places than one. Achab was a king and Jesabell a queen, and yet what the prophet Elias said to the one and to the other I suppose ye be not ignorant ?

*Lethington.* These were singular motions of the Spirit of God, and appertane not to our age.

[Lethington, who had been "leaning upon the Master of Maxwell's breast," here said, "I am almost weary. I would that some other would reason upon the other heads." But no one coming forward, the discussion on the extent of the obedience due by subjects to their rulers was resumed by him.]

*Lethington.* How will ye prove that the persons placed in authority may be resisted, seeing the apostle has said, "He that resists the powers resisteth the ordinance of God"?

*Knox.* That the prince may be resisted, and the ordinance of God not violated, is evident, for Saul was the anointed king, and the Jews his subjects, and yet they so resisted him that they made him no better than mansworn.

*Lethington.* I doubt if in so doing the people did well.

*Knox.* The Spirit of God accuses them not of any crime, but rather praises them. And therefore I conclude that they who gainstood his commandment resisted not the ordinance of God.

*Lethington.* All this reasoning is not to the purpose. Our question is, whether we may and ought to suppress the Queen's Mass, or whether her idolatry shall be laid to our charge?

*Knox.* Idolatry ought not only to be suppressed, but the idolater ought to die the death.

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*Lethington.* But there is no commandment given to the people to punish their king if he be an idolater.

*Knox.* I find no more privilege granted unto kings by God, more than unto the people, to offend God's majesty. And for the probation, I am ready to produce the fact of one prophet—for ye know, my lord, that Eliseus sent one of the children of the prophets to anoint Jehu, who gave him in commandment to destroy the house of his master Achab for the idolatry committed by him, and for the innocent blood that Jesabell, his wicked wife, had slain.

*Lethington.* We are not bound to imitate extraordinary examples, unless we have the like assurance and commandment. We have not the like commandment.

*Knox.* That I deny; for the commandment—the idolater shall die the death—is perpetual, as ye yourself have granted.

*Lethington.* You have produced but one example.

*Knox.* One sufficeth; but yet, God be praisit, we lack not others. Amasias and Joash, kings of Judah, were both punished for their iniquity—Joash by his awin servants, and Amasias by the whole people.

*Lethington.* I doubt whether they did well.

*Knox.* It shall be free for you to doubt as you



please; but whaur I find execution according to God's laws, I daur not doubt of the equity of their cause. And further, it appears unto me that God gave sufficient approbation and allowance for their conduct, for he blessit them with victory, peace, and prosperity, the space of fifty-two years thereafter.

*Lethington.* But prosperity does not always prove that God approves the acts of men.

*Knox.* Yes, when the acts of men agree with the will of God.

*Lethington.* Well, I think ye shall not have many learnt men of your opinion.

*Knox.* The truth ceases not to be the truth, though men misknow it. Yet, I praise my Lord, I lack not the consent of God's servants in that head. [Here he presented to Lethington the Apology of Magdeburg, signed by certain ministers of the Lutheran Church.]

*Lethington* (after reading the names). *Homines obscuri.*

*Knox.* *Dei tamen servi.*

So the controversy ended, and the scruples of neither party were resolved. It is the way of most controversies. Lethington proceeded to explain why he had not written to Calvin—the explanation being approved by “the clawbacks of the Court”—but even Calvin's judgment would have had little weight. For the division between

the advocates of custom and the advocates of change, between the advocates of authority and the advocates of revolution, is not yet healed. It is one of the root-questions of politics. If every citizen who is dissatisfied with the established order is entitled to take the law into his own hands, orderly government is made impossible. Yet there are extraordinary occasions when resistance to a "wicked ruler" becomes the plainest duty of the subject. The right of insurrection in certain extreme cases is now more fully admitted than it was when Maitland lived; yet even to-day the most advanced theorist will be ready to own that the doctrine of resistance as formulated by Knox could lead only to anarchy.

Maitland, it may here be added, took an active part in the proceedings which were rendered necessary by the alienation of the revenues of the Church. The ministers were very indignant at the inadequacy of the provision which was made for them by the Privy Council,—even the "third" (which was ultimately set aside for their sustentation) being burdened with a provision in favour of the Crown.<sup>1</sup> "Twa parts," they de-

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<sup>1</sup> It was at first a fourth only. Register of Privy Council, 22d December 1561, i. 192. Hunt-ly, after the Act was passed, is reported to have addressed the Council: "Good day, my Lords of the twa-pairte."

clared, "had been freely given to the devil, and the third had been divided between the devil and God." They maintained, moreover, that those who had been empowered by the Council "to modify the stipends" had been niggardly in the extreme. They were particularly wroth with the Comptroller (Wishart, the Laird of Pittarrow), one of their own men, who had been selected indeed to protect their interests; and the contrast between his professions and his practice was severely satirised. "The good Laird of Pittarrow was an earnest professor of Christ; but the meikle devill take the Comptroller!" Maitland, on the other hand, contended that the "modification" had been so favourable to the ministers that at the end of the year the Queen would not have enough "to buy her a pair of new shoes"; and Christopher Goodman, who, though he held an English benefice, had taken a leading part in the controversy, was tersely advised to mind his own business: "Ne sit peregrinus curiosus in aliena republica."

If the religious revolution in Scotland has been bitterly denounced, it has also had eager apologists. The teaching of Knox, we are told, has been "the immediate cause of all that is best and greatest in Scottish character"; and "the resolute and noble effort of the Scottish people

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to make Christ's gospel the rule of their daily lives" has been emphatically approved. The passion of the partisan is apt to provoke indiscriminate retaliation ; and there are men of learning and judgment who do not hesitate to declare, on the other hand, that the revolution, as conducted by Knox, was an immense misfortune for Scotland,—throwing back for not less than two hundred years its art, its civilisation, and even its religion. It does not appear to me that either view is entirely just ; although I incline to hold, upon the whole, that if Maitland's counsels had prevailed, the effect of the Reformation on morals, on doctrine, on the social relations, on the intellectual life, would have been more salutary than it was.

That among the earlier Reformers there were many simple and earnest souls to whom spiritual verities were intensely real—who saw the pure and noble figure of Jesus waiting for them in the heavens, while meantime they themselves in an evil world fought the good fight and kept the faith which He had bequeathed to them—need not be doubted. But this was hardly the aspect in which religion presented itself to the mind of Knox. The jealous God of prophet and psalmist, who had commanded the chosen people to root out the Canaanite and slay the idolater, was the central figure of his theology. Divested

of its technical phraseology, the gospel according to Calvin is capable of succinct definition. The first man had incurred the displeasure of Almighty God by eating forbidden fruit. For this act of disobedience he and his innocent offspring had been devoted to everlasting fiery torments—justly and righteously devoted; but out of the depths of His divine compassion the Lord had devised a scheme of salvation by which a select minority might be enabled to escape. His only begotten Son was sent to bear the punishment which they had incurred, and which otherwise would have fallen on them. While the elect, thus vicariously punished and vicariously redeemed, will be taken up to dwell with their Master and Saviour in heaven, the rest of the human race (who have drawn blanks in this tremendous lottery) will be cast into the tormenting fire of hell, where they will spend eternity in the practice of sin, and in sinking lower and lower into the hideous abyss of evil. This is Calvinism—pure and undiluted; and the tragic conception of the relations between man and his Maker which the gloomy logic of a theologian had conjured up, was seared by Knox and his successors upon the soul of the Scottish people. A horror of great darkness rose up, like a pestilential exhalation, from the pit,—obscuring the gracious light and benignant glory of heaven. What this

whimsically tragic scheme of doctrine (for it is whimsical as well as tragic) had led to in the course of a century or two, is known to every reader of Burns's immortal satires; and men who are yet hardly past their prime can still remember how the religion of Scotland had been demoralised by it when they were boys.

A system of doctrine which is unreal or fantastic must react injuriously, one would fancy, upon the practical morality of a people. "Morality in its theological aspect," to borrow Professor Huxley's weighty words, "is obedience to the will of God." The will of God, as disclosed to the Scottish Calvinist, involved, it must be admitted, some rather singular conclusions. That the Pope was Antichrist, that bishops were servants of the devil, that witches and warlocks were to be burnt alive, that churches were to be built like barns, that works of art were to be disfigured and defaced, that actors of plays were to be branded and banished, that persons who walked in the fields or gathered "grosers" in time of sermon were to be excommunicated, that the Sabbath was a season of penitential gloom, that dancing and other innocent pleasures were a device of Satan, that a belief in the real presence was idolatry, and that the idolater was to die the death,—these were some of the definitions of God's will, to which

the Scottish Calvinists, then and later, proceeded to give effect. The determination to live in obedience to God's will is deserving of all praise ; but it is obvious that the quality of the morality must depend to some extent on the conception that has been formed of what that will requires ; and it cannot perhaps be said that in this sense the Reformers had made any appreciable advance upon the monk and the pardoner.

No one now denies that fanaticism, intemperate zeal, cruel intolerance, iconoclastic excess, characterised the Reformation in Scotland. Is fanaticism good ? Are intemperance, intellectual narrowness, ferocious invective good ? Are these the legitimate fruits of a moral and intellectual revival ? In this sense, again, we have to ask ourselves, Was Knox's way best, or was Lethington's ? Unless the plea of urgent necessity is admitted, there can be no question of what the answer must be. For my own part, I decline to accept the plea. I see no reason to doubt that the Reformation (even in Scotland) might have been successfully conducted on other lines, that a real reform of abuses moral and spiritual might have been brought about without the sacrifice of intellectual breadth and veracity, of moderation, of comprehension, of Christian charity.

When we are told that Knox's Reformation was the cause of all that is "best and greatest"

in the Scottish character, we are tempted to ask whether in point of fact the Scot since Knox's time has risen to any high moral or spiritual level? It is probable that under any form of religion or government the national caution and the national shrewdness would have led to material success and worldly prosperity. But is it just to assert that the severe and gloomy Puritanism of the preachers has impressed upon the national conscience a finer ideal of duty or a higher standard of purity? If this could be truly asserted, then, indeed, the narrowness, the fierceness, the bigotry might be forgiven. That the life led by "the Scottish commons"<sup>1</sup> since the Reformation has been, as a rule, simple, frugal, and devout, I would gladly believe; but that it has been in many respects a maimed and stunted life, wanting in beauty and attractiveness and the instinctive refinement of more favoured nations, as well as hard, narrow, and merciless in judgment and conduct, cannot, I am afraid, be denied. Nor do sobriety, purity, and cleanliness quite consist with certain unpleasant returns which have been taken to show

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<sup>1</sup> It has been said that "the Scottish commons" were created by Protestantism. It appears to me that the commons in Scotland, as the commons elsewhere, were the growth of new social and economical conditions,—the decay of the feudal society, and the rise of the burghal, being among the most active of the agencies at work.



(rather unfairly, I believe) that among the nations of Europe the countrymen and countrywomen of Knox are the most intemperate and the most unchaste.

Any general reflections on national peculiarities should be made with the utmost reserve, and when I say that the Puritan training of the nation had an unhappy effect upon its *morale*, I am ready to admit that the opposite view may be supported by plausible argument. To me, however, it appears that the bonds from which the Scots have had to free themselves in later times, cut them to the bone. The iron entered into their souls; and, while it cannot be reasonably affirmed that the Reformation refined the manners or purified the morals of the people, Covenanter and Cameronian—the lineal descendants of Knox—became as morbidly superstitious and as crazily fanatical as any fasting saint or howling dervish.

If the influence of the Knoxian Reformation upon morals, upon the soul and the conscience, cannot be unreservedly approved, the effect upon the intellectual life was distinctly disastrous. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the witnesses of a new Birth. The fruitful methods of a new philosophy were being applied; the initial step in an incredible development of philosophy, poetry, theology, science, had been

taken. Men who had hitherto walked in a vain show, were about to return to sincerity and to nature; the swaddling-clothes of the middle ages were being laid aside; and the nations of Northern Europe, to whom the mummeries of superstition and the traditions of the schoolmen had grown musty and ill-flavoured, welcomed, with the fresh delight and innocent wonder of children, the free and liberal air of a larger life. Wise thinkers like Erasmus, sagacious statesmen like Maitland, would have associated the ecclesiastical traditions with the new secular impulses; but the Luthers, the Calvins, and the Knoxes were as hostile to intellectual freedom and spiritual breadth as Pope or bishop. The reformers of religion put a new face upon the old unrealities and the old untruths, and then proceeded to enforce them by the time-honoured sanctions,—the fagot here, eternal fire hereafter. Their first business in Scotland was to construct an exhaustive form of excommunication,—directly thereafter they succeeded in obtaining an Act from the Estates which punished witchcraft with death. It need not be added that the higher literature of Scotland, the literature which has given Scotland a place among the nations, owes nothing to its Puritanism. Hume, Burns, Scott—each in his own fashion—led the revolt against the Knoxian tradition.

On the singular figure of Knox himself—the undoubted leader of the religious movement in Scotland—men will continue to look, as his contemporaries looked, with mingled feelings of admiration and aversion. In the case of so unique a personality, the temptation to burn or to adore becomes wellnigh irresistible. The flaws in a character of exceptional force and masterfulness are of course accentuated by its virility; and in Knox especially, it cannot be denied, there was much that was not admirable. Such words as charity, chivalry, magnanimity, were not to be found in his dictionary, and the ideas which they represented he would have laughed to scorn. The coarse strain in his nature is most noticeable, perhaps, in his estimate of, and in his intercourse with, women: there are allusions to his first wife in his letters which no man of natural delicacy could have committed to paper.<sup>1</sup> Marjory Bowes died when he was almost an old man, and then he married the daughter of Lord Ochiltree, a girl in her teens.<sup>2</sup> His impotent struggles to escape from the net which he had incautiously woven for himself in the ‘First Blast of the Trumpet’ are whimsical in the extreme. “Jere-

<sup>1</sup> *e.g.*, Knox to Cecil, August 23, 1559. | dolph to Cecil, January 22, 1564. Knox was born in 1505;

<sup>2</sup> Randolph says she was “a young lass of sixteen.”—Randolph | he married Margaret Stuart in 1564.

mie prayed for the prosperity and health of Nebuchadnezar. Did he therefore justify his cruelty against Jerusalem? I am assured he did not, as his own prophesie beareth plain witness."<sup>1</sup> In his dealings with men, Knox was often unscrupulous,—sometimes, if rarely, dishonest. When the Congregation were anxiously looking for help from Elizabeth, he wrote to Sir James Croft that, as matters stood, the English Government might safely break with France,—“but if ye list to craft with them, the sending of a thousand or more men to us can break no league nor point of peace contracted betwixt you and France; for it is free for your subjects to serve in war any prince or nation for their wages; and if ye fear that such excuses will not prevail, ye may declare them rebels to your realm when ye shall be assured that they are in our company.”<sup>2</sup> Even Croft—“the bell-wether of all mischief”<sup>3</sup>—was shocked, or professed to be shocked, by the cynical levity of the proposal,—how could a “wise man” like Mr Knox fail to see that this “dishonourable device” would deceive nobody? It is needless to repeat that Knox was intensely superstitious. The changes of wind and weather were spiritual portents which the Almighty per-

<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, iii. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Keith, i. 398.

<sup>3</sup> Norfolk to Cecil, June 4,

1560. My impression is that Norfolk alludes to Croft.

mitted him to interpret. His disciples believed, indeed, that the gift of prophecy had been given to their master, as it had been given to Isaiah and Ezekiel. The reasonably probable deductions from current events which native shrewdness enabled him to make, were magnified into inspired vaticinations; and vindictive anticipations of approaching doom not unfrequently brought about their own fulfilment, — as Kirkaldy and others found to their cost. The horizon of his mind was narrow; it had no “atmosphere” or “perspective,” as artists would say; and the limitations of his intellect reacted upon his policy. The historical continuity and the historical development of great institutions were conceptions which he could not grasp. He was ready at any moment to break with the past, and to “establish the Church of Christ *de novo*.” And if his logic was arbitrary, his dogmatism was inveterate. The Bishop of Rome was the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, the Babylonian harlot, — what more needed to be said? He thundered against the Mass; it was more terrible to him than a host of armed enemies; but he failed to show wherein the mystery of the Eucharist was more incredible than the mystery of the incarnation or the mystery of the resurrection, than the miracle in Cana of Galilee, or the miracle in Bethlehem of Judea. He was a

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forcible but not a great or entirely honest reasoner, and the vigorous and animated argument was sometimes sophistical and sometimes puerile. His sarcasm was clumsy, his irony wanted finish. The broad and boisterous caricature in which he delighted was closely akin to horse-play; while his humour, sometimes hilarious, sometimes saturnine, would have shocked a more fastidious society. Yet friend and foe were fain to admit that the weapons in his controversial armoury had one invaluable merit—they almost invariably silenced his adversaries. He convinced as a sledge-hammer convinces. And even if his defects of temper and manner had been graver than they were, this rude and rugged figure, in the plain Geneva gown, can never cease to be interesting and even memorable to Scotchmen. Seldom before had such sturdy courage and such unflagging energy, such fertility of resource, such fire of zeal, such majesty of invective, animated the friends and confounded the enemies of the truth. His undaunted bearing in the presence of learned doctors and hostile nobles cannot be too highly praised. "He never feared the face of man." The constitutional insensibility to danger is shared by many coarse and inferior natures; but Knox was not the vulgar bully of the ecclesiastical arena. The burden of the Lord was upon him. Stronger, far stronger than nat-

ural intrepidity, was the abiding conviction that he had been permitted to enter into the counsels of the Most High, and that the God of Israel was on his side. Thus in the darkest hour his confidence was unshaken. Of him, as of William of Orange, it might be truly said,—“*Sævis tranquillus in undis.*” He was never, indeed, so great as in adversity; and when, from the wrath of man and the wiles of the Evil One, the afflicted people of God appealed to the Eternal, it was the voice of Knox that shaped their prayer. “It remaineth that both they and we turn to the Eternal, our God (who beats down to death to the intent that He may raise up again, to leave the remembrance of His wondrous deliverance, to the praise of His own name), which, if we do unfeignedly, I no more doubt but that this our dolour, confusion, and fear shall be turned into joy, honour, and boldness, than that I doubt that God gave victory to the Israelites over the Benjamites after that twice with ignominy they were repulsed and dung back. Yea, whatsoever shall become of us and our mortal carcasses, I doubt not but that this cause, in despite of Sathan, shall prevail in the realm of Scotland. For as it is the eternal truth of the eternal God, so shall it at the last prevail, howsoever for a time it be impugned. It may be that God shall plague some, for that they delight not in the truth, al-

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beit for worldly respects they seem to favour it. Yea, God may take some of his dearest children away before that their eyes see greater troubles. But neither shall the one nor the other so hinder this action but in the end it shall triumph.”<sup>1</sup>

So long as Maitland retained the control of public affairs in Scotland, the provisional religious peace was strictly observed. It may be truly said that during the whole of his administration, inasmuch as active intolerance was discouraged by those in power, Ephraim did not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim. The principles of wise restraint and judicious abstinence were recommended to priest and people by a Minister who was constitutionally averse to “the falsehood of extremes.” On the fall of Mary and the retirement of Maitland, Knox regained his influence over the lords. At the Assembly of the “Kirk of God,” which met at Edinburgh on 25th July 1567, the nobility, barons, and others of the Kirk promised faithfully, in the presence of God, “to root out, destroy, and utterly subvert all monuments of idolatry,” and thereafter “proceed to the punishment of the idolaters.” And on the 29th, Morton, for the infant King, who had been crowned

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, i. 472.



that day, solemnly swore that "out of all my lands and empire I shall be careful to root out all heresy,"—an oath confirmed by Moray himself as Regent on the 22d of August,—“Out of this realm of Scotland, and empire thereof, I shall be careful to root out all heretics and enemies to the true worship of God.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Register of the Privy Council, i. 536-42-48.

## CHAPTER TWO.

### MAITLAND AND CECIL.

**WE** have seen that there was an active and unscrupulous faction in Scotland who were always bitterly hostile to Mary Stuart. They suspected her as a "Frenchwoman"; they detested her as a "Papist." Randolph, whose relations with Knox were close, if not cordial, has described the situation with his usual lucidity: "And to make it more plain unto your Majesty, so long as this Queen is in heart divided from her subjects through the diversity of religion, they neither have that quietness of mind nor peace in conscience that is most to be desired in true worship of their sovereign, nor yet see how her state can long continue, seeing the self-same seeds remain that was the occasion of a former mischief."<sup>1</sup> With the help of Maitland, the Scottish irreconcilables were mean-

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Elizabeth, 26th May 1562.

while kept in check. But Mary had other than domestic enemies, and among these the most powerful was the famous Minister of Queen Elizabeth. Cecil's conviction that Mary Stuart, as Queen of Scotland, was a constant menace to England and to Elizabeth never wavered. But for Cecil, Maitland's policy of conciliation might have succeeded. The disaffected faction were in a minority. The "Professors" were not popular with the great nobles or with the mass of the common people. The high-spirited girl, with the blood of Bruce in her veins, could count with confidence on every Scotchman whose patriotism was more deeply rooted than his Calvinism. But Cecil, like Knox, had resolved from the outset that Mary should fail; and Cecil's patient animosity was even more deadly than Knox's truculent violence. They were in many respects uncongenial allies; but they had correctly apprehended the conditions of the problem which they had set themselves to solve, and each knew that the one was indispensable to the other.

Much, I admit, may be urged for Cecil. He was fighting the battle of reasonable Protestantism against heavy odds. England was, as it seemed, the last citadel of freedom; England alone stood between Charles V. and universal empire. "The Emperor is aiming at the sovereignty of Europe, which he cannot obtain with-

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out the suppression of the reformed religion; and unless he crushes the English nation, he cannot crush the Reformation.”<sup>1</sup> These were the words of the foremost man in England at the moment; and it was owing to him, more than to any other English statesman, that England was not crushed in the contest. But the risks as well as the responsibilities were enormous; and we need not blame him over-much if the weapons which he selected were not invariably those which a more fastidious taste or a more sensitive conscience would have approved. Norfolk had told Cecil in 1560 that he was glad to learn that Elizabeth had determined to “go through” with the Scottish business, “*either by fair means or foul.*”<sup>2</sup> The phrase was as apt and expressive as it was frank. Mary was, from first to last, a danger to Elizabeth, and it was necessary that the danger, “by fair means or foul,” should be removed. Elizabeth’s advisers, it may be admitted, did not exaggerate the possible peril. A stormy channel divided England from the mainland of Europe, and a race of hardy mariners were being bred who could be trusted to hold their own upon the narrow seas. But the Border was the weak point in the

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<sup>1</sup> Creighton’s ‘Age of Elizabeth,’ p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Norfolk to Cecil, 19th April 1560.

national defence. It was the chink in Cecil's armour. While resolutely facing the great Catholic powers of the Continent, the English statesman was always haunted by an uneasy suspicion that there was danger in the rear. The "auld enemy" hung like a thunder-cloud above the northern passes. The Scottish Border was "a dry march," and the road by Carlisle or Newcastle to the south a beaten thoroughfare. If a French or Spanish force were once landed at Leith or Dumbarton, it might be at Durham within the week. Mary was a covert or open enemy: a vital position could not be left in an enemy's hand; at all hazards, it must be carried. Cecil's friendly overtures were only diplomatic feints; the negotiations in which he engaged between 1561 and 1566 were not seriously intended; and while waiting patiently for the inevitable outbreak (which in the meantime he was doing his best to provoke), he adroitly contrived to amuse Mary and occupy her Ministers with illusory prospects of friendship and alliance.

Maitland's position as Mary's Minister was not less clear. Scottish patriots and Scottish prophets had dreamt from of old of a Scottish prince upon the English throne; and Maitland, if not a prophet, was a patriot to the core. If Elizabeth died childless, Mary was the next heir; and the vision of the long line of kings, of



Banquo's issue, "that twofold balls and treble sceptres carry," which haunted the owner of a fruitless crown and a barren sceptre like a nightmare, was beheld by Maitland with growing distinctness. Thus and thus only could any solution of the old puzzle be brought about. There would be a union of the crowns, and a union, so far as Scotland, so far as the weaker and more jealous people was concerned, neither humiliating nor inglorious. The clause in the Treaty of Edinburgh, which provided that Mary "in all times coming" should renounce the right to the English succession, was one therefore which he could not advise her to ratify; but if this clause were withdrawn and the Scottish right of succession were recognised, then Mary might bind herself to become the close ally of England; might enter into a marriage agreeable to Elizabeth; might even acquiesce in the doctrine and conform to the ritual of the Anglican branch of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. This was, it seems to me, a policy of patriotism and common-sense; and to this policy Maitland steadily adhered. It did not succeed; but *that*, as we shall see, was not his fault.

The historians of the period, indeed, have maintained with suspicious unanimity that Maitland's policy was altogether impracticable. No peace was possible, they hold, until Mary, by

signing the Treaty of Edinburgh, had explicitly renounced her claim to Elizabeth's crown. "The Scottish Queen," Mr Burton asserts, "by declining to accept of the Treaty of Edinburgh, adhered to her claim on the English throne;"<sup>1</sup> but the provision in the Treaty to which Mary prudently and reasonably demurred (as it seems to me) was, that she and her husband should "in all times coming" abstain from bearing the English title.<sup>2</sup> Could these words be construed into an absolute renunciation of her right, or could they not? If they could not, then Maitland was over scrupulous; but if (by any license of diplomacy or verbal ingenuity) they were capable of being so construed, he was bound to protect the Scottish interest in the succession "by declining to accept of the Treaty."

It does not appear to me that the opposite view can be seriously argued; even Cecil himself ultimately allowed that it could not. We shall see indeed that, as time wore on, the ground of debate was gradually shifted,—the reasonableness of Mary's contention being in the end expressly recognised by Elizabeth's Ministers.

No one can doubt that Maitland ardently desired the union of the nations. He was in-

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<sup>1</sup> History of Scotland, iv. 289.

<sup>2</sup> The Treaty is printed in Haynes.

deed all his life a passionate Unionist, and for union he was ready to sacrifice much that to a Scotsman was dear. He adhered steadily to Mary Stuart; she had interested him, and perhaps fascinated him, as we have seen; but his loyalty to her cause is mainly to be ascribed, I believe, to the clear conviction that under no other ruler could the nations be brought together. To every Scotsman who might otherwise have aspired to the Scottish crown—to Arran, to Darnley, to the Lord James—there was one insuperable objection,—his accession would make union impossible. Failing Elizabeth and the issue of Elizabeth, Mary was the undoubted heir of Henry VII.; and the English people would have Mary, and Mary only.

It was during the years of which I am now writing—that is to say, between 1561 and 1566—that Maitland was most powerful; his authority with Mary, if not with Elizabeth, was unbounded; and our estimate of the policy which he pursued at this time must largely determine our judgment of his capacity and sagacity as a statesman of the first rank. I do not wish my conclusions to be taken on trust; his own letters are in evidence; and from these a fairly intelligible view of his attitude to the great public affairs in which he was engaged may be obtained. They are sometimes enig-



matical, often elliptical; but, as a rule, "the mark at which he constantly shot" (to use his favourite expression), is defined with entire lucidity and eminent frankness.

Maitland's commanding position at this time is attested by all his contemporaries. He was the real ruler of Scotland during the comparatively peaceful and prosperous years that succeeded Mary's return. Moray might be in greater place, and the Calvinistic historians were naturally desirous to associate the name of their most eminent leader with the firm yet judicious conduct of public affairs which characterised the administration; yet even Moray's eulogists are constrained to admit that he was skilfully seconded by Maitland. "Moray employed as his chief counsellor,"—this is Buchanan's testimony—"William Maitland, a young man of prodigious ability, whose brilliant talents had already lent lustre to his career, and excited the liveliest expectations of future excellence. By their firmness and wisdom entire tranquillity was preserved, both at home and abroad,—a state of affairs agreeable to all good men, and disagreeable to the factious only." If the records of the secret diplomacy of the time are to be trusted, it was Maitland, however, rather than Moray, who was the master spirit at Mary's Court. Moray's grave and decorous walk in life is mildly approved; but

Lethington is the dominating personality, and his political influence is unbounded. He was the principal Secretary (the Secretary of State, as we would say); a member of the Privy Council; the envoy to Elizabeth and Catherine of Medicis; Mary's closest and most trusted adviser. *The union of the kingdoms; the ratification of the Treaty of Edinburgh; the succession to the English crown; the Queen's marriage;* were among the most urgent of the controversies that engaged the attention of diplomatists during the comparatively peaceful years that preceded the Darnley misadventure; and on all these questions Lethington was the spokesman of the Scottish Government. But he was more. Randolph's letters indicate unmistakably that the Secretary's judgment was the determining factor in any resolution taken at Holyrood. On all questions of foreign or domestic policy his opinion was decisive. In the lively letters of Elizabeth's envoy, from which some extracts may here be given—letters which throw a vivid light upon the scenes in which, and the men among whom, he moved—the Lord of Lethington is unquestionably the most interesting and imposing figure.

I had brought the narrative of events in an earlier chapter to the period of Mary's return to Scotland. Soon after her return Lethington was

despatched with a conciliatory message to Elizabeth; and it was during his absence that Randolph was for the first time presented to Mary. "She spake nothing to me at the time of my tarrying here," he reported to Elizabeth, "but after my departure, told my Lord James she perceived that your mind was that I should remain here. And after some words, both in earnest and mirth, had between them of my doings here in times past,—'Well,' saith she, 'I am content that he tarry, but I'll have another there as crafty as he.' I threatened upon the Lord James that these words were rather his than her Majesty's; but, however it be, there is one presently of hers with your Majesty that can play his part with craft enough."<sup>1</sup> Mary was absent from Edinburgh when Maitland returned; but Randolph saw him as he passed to the Court. "He was as greedy to hear news of this country as I was desirous to hear of mine. I find that his absence hath nothing hindered his credit. It is suspected that the Lord James seeketh too much his own advancement, which hitherto little appeareth for anything he

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Elizabeth, 6th September 1561. "Crafty" is here used in the sense of "politic." In his letter of the 12th September, Randolph asks for an increase of his allowance, seeing that "Scotland is no place where I can live without money in my purse."

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ever received worth a groat. It is thought that Lethington is too politic; and take me these two out of Scotland, and those that love their country shall soon find the want of them. The Papists bruit them to favour England too well; others that they are too well affectioned to their own; so that these two alone bear the bruit and brunt of whatsoever is either done, thought, or spoken.”<sup>1</sup> “I receive of her Grace at all time,” he adds in a later letter, “very good words. I am borne in hand by such as are nearest about her, as the Lord James and the Lord of Lethington, that they are meant as they are spoken; I see them above all others in credit, and find in them no alteration, though there be those that complain that they yield too much unto her appetite, which yet I see not. The Lord James dealeth according to his nature, rudely, homely, and bluntly; the Lord of Lethington more delicately and finely, yet nothing swerveth from the other in mind and effect. She is patient to hear, and beareth much.”<sup>2</sup> Writing a day or two afterwards, he alludes to some of the things which Mary had to hear and bear. “It is now called in question whether that the Princess being an Idolater may be obeyed in all civil and political actions. I think marvellously of the

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 24th September 1561.      <sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 29th October 1561.

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wisdom of God that gave this unruly, inconstant, and cumbersome people no more power than they have, for then would they run wild. Now they imagine that the Lord James groweth cold, that he aspireth to great matters; Lidington ambitious and too full of policy. So there is no remedy, say they; it must yet come to a new day. To the contrary of this I persuade by all means that I can; and in my conscience they are in the wrong to the Lord James. And whensoever Lidington is taken out of his place, they shall not find among themselves so fit a man to serve in this realm. As I thought thus to have ended, there were sent unto me your letters, brought by Le Croc, who, as the Lord of Lidington giveth me to understand, hath made very honorable report of the Queen's Majesty, my sovereign. The Lord James also confirmeth the same with many merry words, that this Queen wished that one of the two were a man, to make an end of all debates. This, I trow, was spoken in her merry mood." <sup>1</sup> In the letter of the 17th December, Mary's "merry words" are again repeated. "When any purpose falleth in of marriage, she saith that she will have none other husband than the Queen of England. He is right near about her who hath often times heard

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 4th November 1561.

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her speak it." Randolph obviously alludes to Lethington, of whom, in the same letter, he says, that "the more privy he is unto all her doings than it is possible for me to be, the better is he able to inform your Honour of her thoughts in that matter; and I assure myself that there lacketh no good will in him thereunto; for so much as I am able myself to conjecture, she meaneth no less than to do what she can to unite the two realms in so perfect an amity, as the like hath not been. I never have access unto her Grace on any occasion but our purpose endeth in that matter. The Bishops know not yet what they may well think of her. The Lord James, say they, beareth too much rule; Lidington hath a crafty head and fell tongue;"<sup>1</sup> and between the two they were sadly perplexed.

These sketches belong to the year 1561; from that time onwards Maitland's influence was constantly on the increase. "The Lord James" had a good deal of what the most whimsical of English humourists has called "worldliness and other worldliness" in his nature; and while by no means so rapacious as Morton, the fair lands of Mar or Moray were prizes which he eagerly coveted, and which he pursued with characteristic

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 7th December 1561.

patience and tenacity. His position, moreover, was somewhat difficult,—the leader of the “precise Protestants” was also the brother of the Queen. We need not wonder, therefore, that he should have maintained a certain reserve, and that while he was engaged in consolidating a great territorial position, the conduct of public affairs should have been more and more entrusted to Maitland. The friendly relations between the two statesmen were not interrupted; yet there are indications that Moray had begun to realise that he was being thrust into the background by his more adroit and brilliant colleague.

To return to Randolph. The English envoy was a hearty advocate of Maitland’s proposal that the Queens should meet. “Touching this Queen’s going into England, how, when, with many other things that are to be weighed therein, I trust your Honour is satisfied, or at the least knoweth the Lord of Lethington’s judgment, who both doth all, and ruleth those matters as may best fall out to the Queen his mistress’ honour, and weal of both realms.”<sup>1</sup> But even in a matter of his own devising Maitland showed his constitutional wariness. “I find in him great good will to further all godly purposes that may draw on amity or kindness, but

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 2d January 1562.

he allegeth the danger to be so great, and the event so uncertain, that it behoveth him warily to proceed. As the felicity shall be great if there come good success of any meeting that may be between the two Princesses, so the least thing that seemeth amiss is his utter ruining. He findeth not such maturity of judgment and ripeness in experience in his Mistress as he doth in the Queen's Majesty my Sovereign, in whom both nature and time hath wrought much more than is common to many of greater years,<sup>1</sup> wherefore he judgeth it the harder dealing with her in those cases, and the more peril to be the only author, counsellor, and persuader in so weighty a matter. We have disagreed. He looked for assurance in all things. *Audaces, I say, Fortuna adjunat, et non fit sine periculo facinus magnum et memorabile.*"<sup>2</sup> Lethington was not deficient in audacity; and possibly the show of reluctance had been exaggerated; for within a few days all difficulties at Holyrood appear to have been removed. "If it were not committed to me for a great secret, I could assure your Honour that it is so far resolved and concluded between this Queen, the Lord James, and the Lord Ledington, that if it be not utterly refused

<sup>1</sup> This letter was obviously intended for Elizabeth's perusal.

<sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 15th January 1562.



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by you it shall pass any man's power in Scotland to stay it. All danger or suspicion is quite set apart. It hath been said unto myself not long since that the dishonour of the father breaking his promise"—to meet Henry VIII. at York—"should be repaired with the affiance and trust the daughter hath in our Queen's virtue and honour. This Queen is so far resolved, that she hath already pressed twice or thrice the Lord of Ledington to pass in post with full commission from her to demand an interview, and to accord in what manner and how it may be ordered." Maitland, indeed, was still desirous to have some more definite promise from Cecil,—“to know from your Honour what appearance there may be of good to either realm—unto which he seemeth to bear so equal and indifferent favour, as if the misfortune of either were utter destruction to himself,”<sup>1</sup>—while there were others, like Knox, who did not regard any approach to friendliness between the Queens with favour. “Some allege the hazard of herself and nobles; many are loth for the charges; others say that amity being once made, that her power will be the greater. Though in verity the charges will be great, and a hard matter to find so much gold that is current in England in men's hands in

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 28th February 1562.

Scotland as will furnish this voyage, yet I know that this last point is more feared of many in Scotland than either of the other two. The difficulty is for the exchange, seeing there are many here that have great sums of silver that have little gold. Of this matter the Lord of Ledington shall have commission to confer,<sup>1</sup> as also of divers other points."<sup>2</sup> It was not, however, until the twenty-third of May that he was able to announce that the Lord of Lethington "departeth hence without fail on Tuesday next"; and Mary's letter to Elizabeth recommending "our trusty and well belovit, the Lord of Lethington, our Principal Secretar," as "being a man of a lang time well known unto you," and inviting her to give credence to him "as to ourself," is dated two days later.

Maitland's mission was speedily accomplished; but the meeting, as we shall see, never took place,—an excuse for delay having been discovered at the last moment by the English Council. He was again in England on Mary's service in 1563. "It is now resolved that the Lord of Ledington shall visit the Queen's Majesty from hence. How shortly he departeth I know not. One thing your Honour may know

<sup>1</sup> The difficulty was afterwards arranged by Maitland.

<sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 31st March 1562.

assuredly, that for the advancement of his mistress' service he will do and say whatsoever lieth in his power. He is charged here to have been over good servant unto her. His advice is followed more than any other's. A man in such place ought to have many wits and well tempered." <sup>1</sup> On the occasion of this visit he went as far as Paris, and proposals for Mary's marriage with a prince of the blood were made to him when there, both by Spain and Austria. He had been instructed on this occasion to correspond directly with Mary, and his growing authority with the Queen appears to have been resented by Moray. He had not returned when Randolph on 3d June wrote to Cecil:—"I know not upon what deserts, but many men have conceived strangely of the Lord of Ledington. I would to God that he had been plainer with my Lord of Moray than he hath been. I know the wisdom of the Lord of Ledington to be such that he will use those matters well at his return. His desire is to do good to all men; and *that* never framed well to any man that hath the place that he occupieth. I write not these things unto your Honour with other mind than that I do lament that such a friend unto our country, such a servant as this Princess

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 6th February 1563.

hath not his like, one that is able and willing to do good for the continuance of amity and peace betwixt the two realms, should in anything overshoot himself.”<sup>1</sup> The differences with Moray, however, appear to have been quickly composed on Maitland’s return. “Upon Thursday last the Lord of Ledington arrived here. These three days past have been too little to satisfy the Queen’s demands. I can yet perceive no misliking of his doings, nor worse opinion of himself than was at his departure. This Saturday at night the Earl of Moray arrived from St Johnston, and found the Lord of Ledington and me communing, being even then in purpose of those points that the unkindness rose between them. I doubt not the Lord of Ledington will well satisfy him, wherein though I never desired to meddle, yet will the Lord of Ledington that I shall speak somewhat before his departure. The natures of them both is so good, that I neither mislike nor mistrust but all matters shall grow to a good end.”<sup>2</sup>

Diplomacy had failed to bring about a meeting between the Queens; and the marriage negotiations which followed were still less successful. The vague promises of Elizabeth, that

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 3d June 1563.

<sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 13th June 1563.

in the event of Mary making a marriage agreeable to England her title to the English Crown would be recognised, were distrusted by Maitland from the first. "The Lord of Ledington wishes that the Queen had descended into more particulars, for he sayeth that those general dealings breed ever suspicion of good meaning. I charged him with no less on his Sovereign's behalf, or rather his own, who was the whole guider of her affairs."<sup>1</sup> Maitland had become by this time "the whole guider of her affairs"; and a year later Randolph, on his way to the Berwick Conference, uses even stronger language. "To meet with such a match your Majesty knoweth what wit had been fit; how far he exceedeth the compass of one or two heads that can guide a queen, and govern a whole realm alone!"<sup>2</sup>

So much for Randolph. I have brought together a few scraps from a voluminous correspondence, which, if carefully sifted and intelligently annotated, might be made public with immense advantage to the serious student of Scottish history.

I now turn to the Cecil correspondence, which, in so far as it is devoted to the discussion of the larger political questions of the day—the Union

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 13th December 1563.      <sup>2</sup> Randolph to Elizabeth, 7th November 1564.

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with England, the succession to the Crown, the marriage of the Queen—is hardly less interesting than Randolph's.

It need not be repeated that Maitland and Cecil were close allies. For several years, indeed, their relations were exceptionally intimate. The English Minister (no less than his mistress) appears to have had the most implicit confidence in Maitland's discretion and judgment. "Oh, for one hour of Lethington!" is the burden of more than one letter. "I have upon this news wished to have had but one hour's conference with the Lord of Lethington;"<sup>1</sup> and long after Maitland was gone he looked back regretfully to "the old familiar friendship and strict amity" which they had steadily maintained, and which had been brought to such a disastrous close. Yet it is impossible to read their correspondence without coming to the conclusion that (whatever success it might have had with Elizabeth herself) Maitland's policy of concord, of a friendly understanding between the Queens, was persistently thwarted by Cecil. Lethington is one of the last men to whom unreasoning obstinacy can be justly imputed. He detested dogmatism. He was seldom, if ever, over-confident. "Your Honour knoweth," he told Cecil on one occasion,

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<sup>1</sup> Cecil to Randolph, 30th June 1561.

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“that I love not to promise things uncertain, and *that* maketh me to write less in this behalf than I see likelihood shall follow.”<sup>1</sup> But Maitland, as we shall find by-and-by, was firmly convinced that if the English Government had left the Scots to settle their own affairs, the conspiracies against Mary would have failed. The Scottish anarchy, in which she went down, was Cecil’s work. His incurable animosity was fatal.

I have said that the Union of the kingdoms was the key-note of Maitland’s policy;—Peace as the means, Union as the end. For ten years at least—say from 1559 to 1569—there is hardly a letter in which the arguments for a close friendship between the nations and their rulers are not pressed home,—with this condition always that the terms of the accord shall not be dishonourable to Scotland. “Your Honour doth know that the mark I always do shoot at is the union of these kingdoms in a perpetual friendship. There is no good in my opinion to be wrought that doth not tend to that end. Now I begin to learn what misery it is for a man to bear a great burden of the common affairs; but I am so far proceeded that forwards I must go.”<sup>2</sup> The siege of Leith was in progress at the

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 27th  
March 1560.

<sup>2</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 9th  
April 1560.

time this letter was written ; and the stout resistance of the handful of French soldiers had begun to dishearten the allies. But Maitland would not listen to any craven counsel ; for he was satisfied that unless the French were removed, and the realm governed by born Scotsmen, Union was impossible. " I am not ignorant how great a burden your Honour doth sustain in these our matters, but since they be so far proceeded, there is no back-going, and therefore I pray your Honour faint not, but go through. I doubt not we shall be shortly at an end. In matters of such consequence, I would not wish we were too scrupulous."<sup>1</sup> He is careful to assure Cecil that the English are very popular with their allies :—" I am assured the people never bare so good affection to any nation as they presently bear to the English."<sup>2</sup> It was only because it would lead to Union that he favoured the Arran marriage. He would rather, he confessed, that the negotiations had been opened more secretly. " Yet did I rejoyce to see the whole Estates, although in other points

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 17th April 1560. There are some interesting letters at this time with reference to the negotiations with the dying Queen in the Castle of Edinburgh—at

which Lethington was present. Maitland to Cecil, 28th April and 24th May 1560.

<sup>2</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 28th April 1560.



of divers opinions, yet with one uniform consent so earnestly wish the consummation of that matter that I well perceive it is the only mean to join us in an indissoluble union."<sup>1</sup> But Cecil received the proposal with marked disfavour, and Maitland's rather frigid logic (he knew that the match was impossible) failed to convince either Elizabeth or her Minister. "You know the purpose for which our Ambassadors come to England, wherein though I have ever found you cold, and that you shifted the matter as one unwilling to talk much in it; yet can I not persuade myself that (being so wise and so well affected towards your country as I know you to be) you do altogether mislike it. It may be that you be entered in a worse opinion of this country upon the late sight you have had of a part of it, seeing the wealth of the same nothing like to your realm; yet am I sure you have sufficiently considered that the lack of wealth doth not proceed from the ground itself, or sterility of the soil, but of other occasions, which be accidents. A realm being years together destitute of constant government, the Princess

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 18th August 1560. There is an account in this letter of the manner in which the Confession of Faith was ratified by the

Estates, "It was no small wonder to see what victory the truth did obtain by so uniform consent." See also the letter of 15th August.

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a minor and furth of her realm, so long in a continual war, and for the most part of the time oppressed with strangers, besides many other incommodities, you may imagine if it have good cause to be very wealthy." Other nations indeed might be richer, yet was their friendship less precious to England "in that God by creation of the world hath granted to us a prerogative above all nations that they with all their riches are not able to purchase."<sup>1</sup>

When early in 1561 the Ambassadors who had been sent to treat for the marriage returned from England, they found the whole situation changed. Francis was dead, and Arran had been refused by Elizabeth. "I see men here will begin to make court to the Queen our Sovereign more than they were wont to do, and press to put themselves in her good grace; yet I fear not but the most part will keep touch with you, whereof I offer myself not only as a mean to do what I can, but also in recognaisance of the great friendship I have found at your hands."<sup>2</sup> In his next letter, Maitland excuses himself for his long silence, — things were so perplexed that he had abstained from writing until he could give Cecil some more resolute

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 13th September 1560.

<sup>2</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 10th January 1561.

advertisement. "Things now grow towards a conclusion. First, in matters of religion many things are determined for the policy of the Church, and order taken for establishing of religion universally, something more vehement than I, for my opinion, at another time would have allowed." But the "vehemence" might be useful if it brought the two nations more closely together, and prevented the Congregation from being over-confident. "The king's death is commonly taken for a great benefit of God's providence, yet durst I never greatly rejoice at it. The security thereof hath lulled us asleep. The fear of strangers is for the present taken away." The nation, he added, was turning to Mary, and the Lord James was to be sent to "grope her mind." Though "zealous in religion, and one of the precise Protestants," the Queen's brother was the most likely ambassador to gain her confidence. The object of the legation was to ascertain "whether she can be content to repose her whole confidence upon her subjects or not." "Though I fear many simple men shall be carried away with vain hope, and brought abed with fair words, yet if my Lord James can fully persuade her to trust her own subjects, I will enter in some courage."<sup>1</sup> In a later letter

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 6th February 1561.

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he describes the views of the various factions,—he himself obviously inclining to the moderate party, which held that Mary should be invited to return, “provided that she neither bring with her force, neither yet counsel of strangers.” Many were anxious, now that the Arran marriage had fallen through, that the old league with France should be renewed,—the amity of England, to which they were joined by “a dry marshe,” not being assured. For his own part, he was confident that, unless Mary could be reconciled to Elizabeth, the intelligence between the two nations could not long continue. “All is as yet calm,” he adds, “and shall be, I doubt not, so long as men can be content to be bridled with reason.”<sup>1</sup>

I have discussed in a previous chapter the import of the letters written by Maitland during the anxious weeks that preceded Mary’s return. In them, it will be remembered, the necessity for a good understanding between the Queens was urgently enforced. The letters that follow are in the same strain. Maitland, as we have seen, was sent to London directly on Mary’s arrival to plead for friendly dealing from Elizabeth, but Elizabeth was too angry to listen to argument.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 26th February 1561.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Herries says that Maitland without any author-

There was only one road to amity, she said,—the ratification of the treaty of Edinburgh. “Ratify the treaty; why do you delay to ratify the treaty?” Maitland adroitly avoided a categorical reply: he had no instructions; there had been no time to summon the Estates; the Queen was busy. But there can be little doubt that he was even then convinced that, until the clause relating to the succession was modified, Mary’s consent ought not to be given. Elizabeth required an absolute renunciation of the Scottish right of succession; the treaty imported as much,—“in all times coming,” even in the event of Elizabeth dying without issue, Mary was to refrain from pressing her claim; and to such renunciation neither Maitland nor Moray was prepared to agree. Maitland, however, was still urgent for a friendly understanding,—how urgent may be gathered from the letters that he wrote on his return to the northern capital. The “tender amity” of the cousins would lead to “a godly accord” between the realms. “If by the means of us two,” he told Cecil, “such a communication

ity introduced the subject of the succession with the view of prejudicing Elizabeth against Mary (Memoirs, p. 59). The highly dramatic dialogue between Elizabeth and Mait-

land reported by Buchanan, and reproduced by Spottiswoode, was constructed by Buchanan in obedience to what were then regarded as the canons of historical art.



may be procured, we shall be esteemed happy instruments for our countries. I know how unwilling you be to enter in matters of so great consequence, yet when you shall consider what surety, quietness, and commodity this motion importeth to the Queen our Sovereign and your native country, I suppose you will be bold to utter frankly your opinion in it. God hath by times offered many means of a godly conjunction. By what providence it hath chanced that none hath taken effect as yet I cannot tell. *This* hath most likelihood to come to pass, is grounded upon equity, and is such as neither party can thereby think himself aggrieved. Surely if this shall be overthrown, as others have been heretofore, it may be judged that God is not pleased with us, and wills that one of us shall ever be a plague to the other. Let us do our duty," he concludes, "and commit the success to God."<sup>1</sup>

The urgency of Maitland contrasts strikingly with Cecil's coldness. The one is eagerly pressing forward; the other is warily holding back. Maitland never wearies in his determination to bring the Queens together; he records every flattering speech that Mary makes; he beseeches Elizabeth to write often and with her own hand. "I see her Majesty in nothing doth like more

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 25th October 1561.

than often to visit and be visited by letters of such as she does love." If Cecil will not be frank, if he will continue to speak in "parables," Maitland will address himself directly to his mistress. But he cannot believe that the English Secretary is hostile. "Weary not by your credit to continue the amity begun. You never did anything more worthy of yourself, nor more worthy of praise in the sight of God and men."<sup>1</sup> For his own part, he admits that there is nothing on earth that he desires more than their friendship. "I trust your Lordship believeth that with all my heart I do wish those two Princesses to be joined in tender friendship, and indeed it is the earthly thing I most earnestly call to God for."<sup>2</sup> On the same day he wrote to Cecil again urging him to use his friendly offices with Elizabeth. "Persuade her Majesty to take occasion sometimes to write with her own hand. Be the letters never so short, or of small moment, yet will her Highness much esteem them coming from that place. We be here in a corner of the world, separated as it were from the society of men, and so do not every day hear what others are doing abroad in the world."<sup>3</sup>

The correspondence during the next year—

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| <p><sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 7th<br/>December 1561.</p> | } | December 1561.   |
| <p><sup>2</sup> Maitland to Dudley, 26th</p>                  | } | December 1561.   |
|   |   | <p><sup>3</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 26th<br/>December 1561.</p> |

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1562—is continued in the same strain,—though a distinctly sharper tone is at times perceptible. Much of it relates to the proposed interview. While anxious that it should take place without delay, the danger of an unfriendly or ineffectual meeting is strongly insisted on by Maitland. His own responsibility was great. “The matter between the Queens be such as may not be communicated to many, so as I am enforced to take upon myself only the whole advising of my Mistress in those causes, without the assistance of others, having none in a manner with whom I dare freely confer, but only my Lord James.” “As to me ever since I entered in any trade of public actions, I have ever been a minister of peace, and always bent myself that way as a thing in my judgment pleasing God and most profitable to both realms.” He implores Cecil to be frank. “Write to me your mind as I do. We shoot both at one scope, which is the union of the isle, and therefore it is not convenient that we should deal together as strangers. I pray you,” he repeats, “write plainly and directly unto me.”<sup>1</sup> A fortnight later he is still more emphatic. The interview would be good and comfortable to all were it brought to a good end; “but (which God forbid) if it should fall out

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 15th January 1562.



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amiss, as it is likely to dissolve the mutual good intelligence, and endanger the peace, so shall it not fail greatly to discredit those who have been its chief promoters." Was it likely to be brought to a good end or would it fall out amiss? That was a question which Cecil only could answer, and Cecil spoke in parables. "Now I will merely complain of you to yourself. You write always to me parables, at least brief and dark sentences, and you have experience of my simplicity. Janus sum non Ædipus. I would be glad that you should utter yourself unto me more plainly."<sup>1</sup>

A letter, written on the last day of February, is, as a vindication of his own consistency, as a statement of the principles on which he was acting, more than usually interesting. He is about to come to London. "I see the Queen my mistress will employ none there but me, although I would be glad, and have earnestly pressed the contrary; but I come no speed." He had many enemies who would at once take advantage of any misadventure. "All these dangers shall not stay me, if I may have any assurance from you that good is like to come of my labour. If you will go no further with me, if you will but write this—'Come: you shall be welcome'—I will boldly proceed, always trust-

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 29th January 1562.

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ing that you will be loth to see me employed in a negotiation of which no good is like to follow. You have always been a father unto me, and whatsoever good luck shall fall unto me is due unto you. Achieve that you have begun, and maintain that you have already made. I am thought here to be one of your creatures. I will never disavow it. Rather than that the amity betwixt these realms I have so long and so many ways travelled in, be not brought to pass, I shall give a shrewd venture. I trust God will prosper all works that be laid on so just a foundation, and I have in a manner consecrat myself to the Commonwealth. The uniting of this isle in friendship hath in my conceit been a scope whereat I have long shot, and whereunto all my actions have been directed these five or six years. I pressed it in Queen Mary's days, although frustrate in the Queen your mistress' time many and divers ways, *and ever as one occasion doth fail me I begin to shuffle the cards of new, always keeping the same roundis.* I shall not weary so long as any hope remaineth."<sup>1</sup>

After the interview had been definitively abandoned, the correspondence between the Ministers slackened. In the beginning of 1563 we find Maitland attributing the cessation of

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 28th February 1562.

their intercourse to some "hidden mystery," and intimating that he would trouble Cecil no longer with letters, but content himself with the Italian proverb, *Quello che é da esser non puo mancar*. He proceeds to point out that while the Scottish Borderers were in such order "as the like was not seen in any age heretofore," there were continual broils upon the English side. "For other news," he concludes, "all things (praised be God) be in good quietness, and no alteration at all, neither in the outward appearance, nor yet the inward affections."<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt indeed (it may be said in passing), that during the early years of Mary's reign the hitherto distracted country enjoyed a singular measure of prosperity and peace, and that the moderation of the Queen, the wisdom of her Minister, had won in a quite unusual measure the confidence of the people.

The tranquillity was short-lived; it was destined to be rudely and wantonly interrupted.

I have now completed what I have to say upon the Cecil-Maitland correspondence in so far as it throws light upon Maitland's policy of conciliation; but there are two letters which, in connection with the Succession controversy and Mary's renunciation of her title under the Treaty

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 3d January 1563.

of Edinburgh, are extremely instructive, and which no student of the political situation can afford to disregard. One of them is signed by Mary; but it may be safely assumed that both were written by Maitland.<sup>1</sup>

The first is dated 7th October 1561. It is from Maitland to Cecil.

Although he had received three letters from Cecil, he had forborne to write—Maitland explained—until Mary had answered the message from Elizabeth sent by Sir Peter Mewtas. That answer having been despatched, and being of such a sort as to satisfy Elizabeth, he was now able to give his own opinion boldly. “I find in the Queen my mistress a good disposition to quietness, but I see therewithall joined a careful regard to her own estate, and such a courage as will be loth to forego her right. If the Queen’s highness your Sovereign will be conformable, she may assure her own estate, have the Queen my mistress to be a trusty and dear friend to her, and put the whole subjects of the isle in a happy estate. God forbid that anything should impede so good a work! It will be easily espied who shall have the better of the bargain. Your

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<sup>1</sup> In fact, alluding to Mary’s letter, Maitland assures Cecil that if it be in any respect amiss, “the lack must be im-  
puted to my unskilfulness and haste.” Maitland to Cecil, 5th January 1562.

gain shall be assured and in your hand; ours only in possibility. You have a great present advantage, and we only a future contingent. If either by Act of Parliament or later will of Henry VIII. anything hath been done derogatory to the Queen my mistress's interest, I pray you consider what injury has been done to us, and how just cause we have to ask redress of it. It doth appear by the contract of marriage, and is true, that Queen Margaret was married to King James IV., my Sovereign's grandfather, as eldest lawful daughter of King Henry VII.; and by your own histories it doth appear that he meant not by the same marriage to debar her, or the issue of her body, from the succession of his crown perpetually, but rather the flat contrary. I remember the Queen's majesty said to me that the like was never demanded of any prince,—his heir-apparent to be declared in his own time.<sup>1</sup> That would have appeared somewhat reasonable if the succession had remained untouched according to the law; but whereas by a limitation men

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan represents Elizabeth as saying that the demand "that while alive I should keep my shroud constantly before my eyes is unexampled" (Book XVII.) That was the argument on which Elizabeth, when hard pressed, always fell back.

The argument of assassination appears to me to have little or no validity; even Mr Froude ultimately admits that "of assassination she could scarcely be in greater danger than she was already," vii. 72.

have gone about to prevent the providence of God, and shift one in the place due to another, then can the party offended do no less than seek the reformation thereof. And for my opinion it is honorable for the Queen's highness your Sovereign to determine certainly the succession of the Crown in her own time rather than to suffer it thus to hang in suspense. For princes be as fathers to their country; and what father, seeing clearly that his sons will contend for his inheritance, will not rather himself appoint the differens. The Queen my mistress is descended of the blood of England, and so of the race of the Lion on both sides. I fear she would rather be content to hazard all than forego her right. I pray you, if it be possible, let no little difficulty frustrate both realms of so great a benefit as is to be looked for by conjunction of these two Princesses. The danger of recourse which the discontented subjects of your realm might have to the heir-apparent, if any were determined, is no sufficient reason in my judgment to defeat so good a purpose. No matter excellent, or of great moment, can be clear of all difficulties; yet might such security be devised as might clear that danger."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 7th October 1561—Haynes, 373. He adds,—“I have been by many who lived in these days credibly informed that if the two kings had met at York, as was once



Maitland was mistaken in assuming that Mary's answer would satisfy Elizabeth. Elizabeth wrote to Mary in November, in a somewhat peremptory strain, desiring to know the reasons why she still delayed to ratify the Treaty. Maitland thereupon advised Mary to defer her answer until he had had an opportunity of consulting Cecil, with whom he had often and amply discussed the question. "What be the impediment why her Majesty ratifieth not the Treaty you can well enough judge. You know how prejudicial it is to her highness, and what interest she may pretend. I will, after my accustomed manner, deal frankly with you: Who can advise her Majesty, being so nigh of the blood of England, to do that which shall make her, as it were, a stranger to it?" If, however, Mary were recognised as the successor, on the failure of Elizabeth's issue, she would consent to anything that might tend to the honour and security of Elizabeth. Such was his confidence in Cecil that, subject to this condition, he would follow whatever course he advised; and Mary would not reply until his advice had been received.<sup>1</sup>

thought, King Henry was fully determined to limit the succession of his crown to our sovereign his nephew, which belike may serve her Highness for a precedent. And if he, being ir-

ritated by the breach of that appointment, did anything prejudicial to his nephew, what equity was in it you may judge."

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 15th December 1561.

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No answer being returned by Cecil, on the 5th of January 1562, Mary addressed herself to Elizabeth. She was surprised to learn, she said, that the English Queen had not been satisfied with her assurances. Her meaning was sincere, just, and upright, and the words were temperate. She had wished the Treaty of Edinburgh to be revised by English and Scottish Commissioners. Elizabeth had asked her to communicate either through Randolph or directly by letter. She preferred the latter course, and "the memory of all former strange accidents" being on her part clean extinguished, will deal with her with perfect frankness, as becomes two sisters whose firm amity has not been shaken. She will not touch upon the circumstances under which the Treaty was passed, or the sufficiency of the commissions of those who negotiated it; but she will go at once to the main question. "How prejudicial that Treaty is to such title and interest as by birth and natural descent of your own lineage may fall to us, by inspection of the Treaty itself you may easily perceive; and how slenderly a matter of such great consequence is wrapt up in obscure terms. We know how near we are descended of the blood of England, and what devices have been attempted to make us as it were a stranger to it. We trust, being so near your cousin, that you would be loth we should



receive so manifest an injury. In so far as the Treaty concerns us, we are content to do all that of reason may be required of us, or rather to enter into a new of such substance as may stand without our own prejudice, in favour of you and the lawful issue of your body; provided always that our interest to that crown, failing of yourself and the lawful issue of your body, may therewithal be put in good surety; which matter being in this sort knit up betwixt us, and the whole seeds of dissention taken up by the root," a great and firm amity might be established.<sup>1</sup>

It does not appear that the letter had the desired effect. Elizabeth did not reply, and Cecil protested that Maitland was "partial" to Mary, and was dealing only for "profit." "There is good reason," Maitland answered with spirit, "why, of all her subjects, I should love and honour her Majesty; yet can I not perceive in this case any point wherein I have uttered my affection or inclined the balance more on the one side than the other: unless, if the matter be narrowly looked to, some might think I am too negligent on her part, whose honour I am bound in duty most to respect. *You* are witness of all my actions in it, and can best judge if I

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<sup>1</sup> Mary to Elizabeth, 5th January 1562—Haynes, 378.

have not ever had the common quietness of the whole isle chiefly before my eyes." What had been proposed, indeed, was more advantageous to Elizabeth than to Mary. "Your game is assured and present; ours but in possibility and altogether uncertain, *et quodammodo spes inanis, pendens a futuro eventu*, wherein there is in a manner no likelihood, your sovereign being young, and apt to bear children, if her mind were disposed to marry." And, except in the sense that "the common quietness" would be profitable to both realms, it could not be said with any justice that he sought amity for "profit" only.<sup>1</sup>

I should have fancied that the import of these and similar letters could not have been misunderstood. But Maitland's apologist has mountains of prejudice to remove; and the part he took, as representing Mary, in the prolonged controversy regarding the ratification of the Treaty of Edinburgh and the Succession, has been persistently misrepresented. It may be prudent, therefore, to state with the utmost precision the pleas which his advocate is entitled to prefer. They are these:—

1. *That if the Treaty of Edinburgh contained an absolute renunciation of the Scottish right of*

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 27th February 1562.

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*succession, Maitland, on behalf of Mary, was justified in refusing to ratify it.*

[About this proposition there can hardly be any difference of opinion. Those who insist that Mary was bound to ratify must hold that the words of the Treaty did not infer an absolute renunciation.]

2. *That, in the opinion of the English and Scottish Ministers, the words of the Treaty amounted to an absolute renunciation.*

[It is enough to refer to Cecil's letter of 14th July 1561 (in which he informs Throckmorton that the possibility of an accord on the footing of admitting Mary's interest "in default of heirs of Elizabeth's body," had been mooted as "a matter secretly thought of"), and to Moray's of 6th August 1561, addressed to Elizabeth,—both written before Mary's return. Moray, after pointing out that Mary will "think it hard, being so nigh of the blood of England, so to be made a stranger from it," suggests, as an admissible solution, the compromise to which Cecil had alluded. "What inconvenience were it (if your Majesty's title did remain untouched, as well for yourself as the issue of your body) to provide that to the Queen my sovereign her own place were reserved to the crown of England, which your Majesty will pardon me if I take to be, by the law of all nations, as she that is next

in lawful descent of the right line of King Henry the Seventh, your grandfather ; and in the meantime this isle to be united in a perpetual friendship ?" ]<sup>1</sup>

3. *That Maitland's proposal that the Treaty should be revised with the view of saving the Scottish right of succession, in the event of Elizabeth dying without issue, was entirely reasonable ; and that its reasonableness was ultimately admitted by the English Ministers.*

[Elizabeth's instructions to the Earl of Bedford, when sent to Scotland to be present at the baptism of Mary's son, the future James VI., dated 7th November 1566, contains these words: "And as yourself knows how we sent you to France to that Queen, to require the confirmation of the Treaty of Edinburgh, and the same being since deferred, upon account of some words therein prejudicial to the Queen's right and title,

<sup>1</sup> Moray to Elizabeth, 6th August 1561. This is one of the rare cases in which Mr Froude's abstract of a letter is imperfect and misleading. Moray asks, What inconvenience were it? (obviously suggesting that there would be none); whereas Mr Froude makes him write, "Inconvenient were it,"—adding, "The inconvenience of which Lord James spoke would

in all likelihood have been her immediate assassination."—vi. 353. This reading is obviously erroneous ; could the Lord James have suggested "a midway" to Elizabeth ("if any midway could be picked out to remove this difference to both your contentments") which would inevitably have led to her "immediate assassination"?

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our meaning is to require nothing to be confirmed in that Treaty but that which directly appertains to us and our children, omitting anything in that Treaty that may be prejudicial to her title, as next heir after us and our children; all which may be secured by a new treaty between us." And she proceeds to declare "that she will neither do nor attempt, nor suffer to be attempted, anything derogatory to Mary's title to be next heir after us and our children."<sup>1</sup> In the articles delivered to Mary by Cecil and Mildmay four years later, it was stipulated that Mary should confirm the clause in the Treaty of Edinburgh, or the true meaning thereof, for her forbearing from all manner of titles, challenges, or pretences to the Crown of England (not, be it observed, "in all times coming," as the clause ran, but) "whilst the Queen's majesty or any issue to come of her body shall live and have continuance; with provision for the Queen of Scots that thereby she shall not be secluded from any right or title that she or her children may hereafter have, if God shall not give to the Queen's majesty any issue of her body to have continuance." The article, as amended by Mary, was agreed to.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Instructions to the Earl of Bedford, 7th November 1566. | Calig. x. 384.  
<sup>2</sup> Articles delivered to the

Other references might be given ; but these are sufficient to show that Elizabeth and Cecil were latterly ready to admit that Maitland's contention was well founded.]

4. *That the failure to arrive at an accord was due to the double-dealing of Elizabeth, and not to Mary's bad faith.*

But the arguments on which this proposition proceeds cannot be properly appreciated until the circumstances attending Mary's marriage have been described.

We have arrived at the beginning of the year 1564. By that time, through Maitland's urgency, the marriage negotiations had made considerable progress. Mary Stuart was the greatest match of the day,—Queen of Scotland, Dowager of France, there was no alliance to which she might not aspire. Her hand, indeed, was being eagerly competed for by half the princes in

Queen of Scots, 5th October 1570 — Haynes, 608. It is highly characteristic of Mary's magnanimous spirit that even in her captivity she resolutely declined to agree to the Article by which the exiled Northumberland was to be delivered to Elizabeth. She would not consent, she declared, "as it may not stand with her honour to deliver those who are come for

refuge within her country, as it were to enter them in place of execution." The governing party in Scotland were not so scrupulous. Morton sold the fugitive to Elizabeth (after he had been treacherously arrested by Moray) for a few thousand pounds. The people, however, were furious ; and Moray's treachery was never forgiven by the Borderers.

Europe,—France, Spain, Austria, Sweden, being each in the field. But as a foreign marriage would have been regarded with displeasure by the English Government, Mary, on Maitland's advice, *conditionally* undertook, for the satisfaction of Elizabeth, to accept an English or Scottish noble. The condition was to the effect that in the event of Elizabeth dying without issue, Mary should be declared her heir.

Cecil, as we have seen, had all along been passively obstructive; he had declared against the interview; he had delayed the settlement of the succession; he had spoken in parables. Although the form of the controversy had by this time changed, the same dilatory pleas continued to be put forward. Elizabeth trifled about Mary's marriage as she trifled about her own. She lured Mary on with promises which she did not mean to keep. She led Mary to understand that if her advice about the marriage was followed, Mary's desire for recognition would, in one form or other, be gratified.

I am by no means sure that, even with the ample materials now available, we know the whole truth. It is difficult to unravel these tortuous intrigues. There is a sudden and mysterious change in the attitude of several of the leading actors which I do not think has been entirely explained. But some time before the close of

1564, there are indications that Cecil was becoming actively aggressive. He appears to have felt that the opportunity for which he had waited had at length arrived. The diplomatic farce had been played out, and he could, with such decent reservations as might be prudent, show his hand to his Scottish confederates. Of Knox and the Knoxians he was sure; there had already been misunderstandings between Moray and Maitland and Moray and Mary which might be used to detach James Stuart from his sister's side.

The apple of discord was found in Darnley. Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, was the great-grandson of Henry VII. Margaret Tudor, a year after Flodden was fought, had married the Earl of Angus, by whom she had one daughter, and this daughter was Darnley's mother. There were doubts about Margaret Douglas's legitimacy; it was said that Angus had been contracted to Lady Traquair, and that the subsequent marriage with Margaret Tudor was irregular, if not invalid. Cecil was nothing loath to utilise any plea of the kind when it would serve his turn; but the objection was never seriously pressed, and Darnley was everywhere recognised—with special cordiality by the great Catholic houses—as the lawful cousin of Mary and Elizabeth. The Lennox Stuarts were themselves closely related to the reigning family; so



that on either side the descent was illustrious : than the young Lord Darnley—for he was only a lad of eighteen—no noble with more of the royal blood of Scotland and England in his veins was to be found in either realm. The Hamiltons, if Mary left no child, would inherit the crown ; but the legitimacy of the Hamiltons was as open a question with the curious in genealogies as the legitimacy of the Stuarts ; and in spite of a great political and territorial position, they were nowhere popular. From every point of view—save one—Henry Stuart was a desirable *parti*. The exception, indeed, was serious. Though tall and handsome in person, his mind was feeble, his moral nature undisciplined, his temper intractable and uncertain. Lennox, who had fled to England when Arran went over to France, had been in exile now for more than twenty years. The Scottish earl, in fact, had become an English subject ; he had married in England, his children had been born in England, his estates were in England. Although his relations with the English Court, which during Mary Tudor's time had been exceptionally cordial, had become strained, if not unfriendly, on Elizabeth's accession, his eldest son, as the nearest prince of the blood, was already a familiar figure at Greenwich and Westminster. " Yet you like better of yonder long lad," Elizabeth said to Melville

when Robert Dudley was made an earl. The "long lad" was the young Henry Stuart.<sup>1</sup>

To unravel the tangled skein of Elizabeth's intrigues is, as I have said, no easy matter. It is possible that her tortuous policy was not consistently pursued; she lived, so to speak, from hand to mouth, and she was not restrained by any fastidious scruples, by any weak regard for appearances, from turning her back on herself. In these circumstances, any show of dogmatism, any over-confidence, ill becomes the historian; and I cannot venture to affirm that the explanation which I suggest is more than reasonably probable. The view I take is this;—the policy of procrastination being in the meantime no longer admissible (for neither Mary nor Maitland would consent to further delay), it became Elizabeth's cue to fan the smouldering embers of Scottish disaffection into a flame; and she may have shrewdly calculated that between Robert Dudley and Henry Stuart some cause of quarrel, some ground of offence, was sure to be found. This much at least may be asserted with tolerable confidence; if Mary during these negotiations was not forced into an utterly false position, it was not the fault of Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's conduct (except perhaps on the

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<sup>1</sup> Melville's *Memoirs*, p. 48.

plea that the law of self-preservation overrides every other), admits of no excuse. She allowed Lennox to return to Scotland, and warmly recommended him to the good offices of Mary; a little later Darnley received permission to follow his father to the Scottish Court; he had barely crossed the Border when the Scottish Queen was informed with almost insulting directness that even if she condescended to marry Leicester (the English noble selected by Elizabeth), her claim to the English succession would not be admitted. We need not wonder that in these circumstances it should have been the general impression that the marriage with Dudley had never been seriously contemplated by Elizabeth, and that Darnley was sent north to woo, if not to win, his cousin.<sup>1</sup>

The conviction that Elizabeth was acting in bad faith appears to have been universal at the time. Her own Ministers did not believe that she would resign the one man by whom her heart had been touched. All the contemporary writers were of opinion that her indignation at Mary's choice of Darnley was simulated. Melville, who was much employed in England at the time, expressly says,—“The Queen of England began to

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Robert Dudley was created Earl of Leicester on 29th September 1564.



suspect that the marriage with Leicester might take effect. Her apprehension of this occasioned the Lord Darnley his getting more readily license to come to Scotland in hope that he, being a handsome lusty youth, should rather prevail being present, than Leicester who was absent. Which license was procured by means of Secretary Cecil, not that he was minded that any of the marriages should take effect, but with such shifts to hold the Queen unmarried as long as he could."<sup>1</sup> Knox writes to the same effect. "In her heart Queen Elizabeth was not angry at this marriage; for she thought that the Scots Queen being married to one of inferior rank, would be less proud."<sup>2</sup> Buchanan, Castelnau, Randolph, Sir James Balfour, Lady Lennox, were all confident that the marriage was secretly favoured by Elizabeth; and the testimony of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton who had been sent to Scotland to declare her displeasure, is still more conclusive. He warned Cecil that it was of the utmost importance for the success of his negotiation that the real opinion of the English Council should not be known in Scotland. "I should be sorry if any one coming out of England should be able to give this Queen intelligence that her proceedings with Lord Darnley are not so ill taken there

<sup>1</sup> Melville's Memoirs, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Knox, ii. 474, 481.

by her Majesty and her Council as in all my negotiations I *pretended*; for that would much hinder the purpose the Queen would be at.”<sup>1</sup> “The purpose Elizabeth would be at”—whatever that purpose might be—would be hindered, Throckmorton believed, by her duplicity being exposed.

It may be argued, indeed, that Elizabeth, in covertly promoting the Darnley marriage, was acting unwisely, and against her own interest. It rather appears to me, however, that a policy which Cecil approved must have had something to recommend it. Mary, if she married Darnley, could not marry Leicester. Though it is true that Elizabeth (so far as we can see) had no sincere intention of parting with her lover, yet, if Mary was driven into rejecting him, his dismissal might be construed into an affront. On the pretext, moreover, that Mary had failed to implement her promise to marry the English nobleman selected by Elizabeth, the negotiations regarding the Succession (which had been growing inconveniently pressing) might be definitively closed. Then it was by no means improbable that a Lennox marriage might set Scotland in a blaze. The two great feudal houses of Hamilton and Douglas would regard such an

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil, 21st May 1565.

alliance with not unnatural jealousy. There was an old blood-feud between the Hamiltons and the Stuarts. Chatelherault was meantime the heir-apparent to the throne, but his title would no doubt be set aside if Darnley were made king. Morton was the guardian of his nephew the youthful Earl of Angus—an influential and lucrative office; but if the Lennox proscription were annulled, the claims of the Lady Margaret Douglas would become formidable. She was the rightful heir, and it could at least be plausibly maintained that the honours and estates of Archibald Douglas had lawfully vested in his daughter.<sup>1</sup> Knox and the “precise Protestants” were ready to rise at any moment, and the Queen’s marriage with a nobleman who was said to be a Papist, and who was certainly not a “precise Protestant,” would furnish a colourable apology for rebellion.

Through this difficult country—where pitfalls abounded—Lethington had to travel as best he might. It was becoming more obvious to him every day that, in the present temper of the English Government, the close alliance between the Queens on which he had counted could not

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<sup>1</sup> Morton was secured by Lady Lennox resigning any claim she might have; “for which,” Morton afterwards declared, in a letter to Maitland, “I gave the Queen 1000 crowns in a purse.”—Bannatyne’s *Journal*, p. 480.



be secured. The offer of Dudley had been received by him with incredulity,—the worthless minion of Elizabeth could be no fit match for his mistress. It was little better than an insult, indeed, to limit Mary's choice to the "scoundrel"<sup>1</sup> of whom Cecil, remembering the suspicions attaching to Amy Robsart's marriage and death, had written: "Nuptiæ carnales a lætitiâ incipiunt et in luctu terminantur."<sup>2</sup> Maitland would probably have preferred a royal alliance for his mistress; he saw the Spanish Ambassador when in London, during the summer of 1564, and there was some talk of Don Carlos.<sup>3</sup> But the risks were too great, and Lethington, from this time forward, if I am not mistaken, favoured Darnley's suit. A far-seeing statesman like Maitland must have instinctively recognised that in many ways a marriage, which would conciliate the rivalries and consolidate the claims

<sup>1</sup> "The scoundrel object of Elizabeth's own affections."—Froude, viii. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Hatfield Calendar, p. 337.

<sup>3</sup> There is a curious account of Don Carlos in one of Chaloner's letters to Elizabeth at this very time. "The Prince, as everybody affirmeth, hath a wit, but a strange wit; not removable from an opinion once caught; liberal; a rememberer

of injuries; desirous of State and rule; a despatcher of suitors; far diverse from liking of many things that his father liketh. Notable tales have been told me, both of his deeds and sayings."—10th August 1564. Hatfield MSS., p. 301. The Don Carlos negotiation by Maitland is described in a letter of the Bishop of Aquila. Froude, vii. 497.

of those who were descended from Margaret Tudor, would be highly politic. He was probably led to believe, like the rest of the world, that such a union would not be disagreeable to Elizabeth. He had no reason to suppose that it would be displeasing to Moray. Knox, he knew, would be hostile; but Knox's hostility was to be counted on in any case. The weakness and violence of Darnley's character had not yet been offensively manifested, and altogether there was much to recommend the match.

Moray was still the close ally of Maitland. Up to the close of 1564 they continued, as we know, to work cordially together. There had been temporary misunderstandings, it is true; but these had been cleared up; and there was nothing to show that any radical divergence of opinion had been established. Moray had been as confident as Maitland that the return of Lennox would be attended with no danger to the English alliance or to religion. How then are we to explain his precipitate desertion to the enemy? his sudden animosity to Darnley? his frantic alarm for religion? Moray, as I have said before, had little original or independent force; at one time he was led by Maitland, at another by Knox, at another by Morton; it would rather appear that now—the gift of the earldom having been duly ratified by the Estates—Knox was



regaining the ascendancy which he had lost. Cecil, moreover, had become of late more distinctly averse to the policy of conciliation. Yet these circumstances are insufficient to explain altogether the sudden change of front; there must have been, besides, some obscure Elizabethan intrigue, of which no trace has been recovered.<sup>1</sup> Moray's apologists have admitted that he was not unaffected by the last infirmity of noble minds; and his enemies did not hesitate to affirm that he was as inordinately greedy of money as of power. To either of these frailties the appeal may have been directed; but that he sincerely held, when he took up arms against his sister, that liberty and religion were in imminent peril, I do not, for my part, believe.

Maitland was very active during the anxious months that preceded the marriage. He must have appreciated, as we have seen, the political

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<sup>1</sup> Was it the promise of the Crown? Mary's letters seem to point to this; and Moray had always been regarded as a probable candidate in the English interest. The Prior of St Andrews was "to be thought of" in certain eventualities, Croft wrote to Cecil (3d August 1559), and Cecil had afterwards expressed the opinion that "the Lord James was not unlike to be a king soon" (19th June 1560). Randolph reported, on 3d May 1565, that the Queen had said of Moray—"She saw whereabouts he went, and that he would set the crown upon his own head." See also Lord Herries's Memoirs (35, 54), in which it is alleged that these suspicions were generally entertained, and not by Mary only.

advantages of the Lennox alliance; and the bent of his inclination may be gathered from occasional allusions in Randolph's letters. "The Queen undertakes to end the quarrel between the Duke and the Earl of Lennox, whose name Lethington is now supposed to favour from the love he beareth to Mary Fleming." "Some there are that would I should believe that he liketh better of Lord Darnley than any other." "The Queen maketh no word of Darnley; yet many suppose it concluded in her heart, and Maitland is wholly bent that way." "Lord Ruthven is wholly theirs. Maitland is suspected to favour the Queen and Darnley more than he would seem; and yet he is not trusted by them," he adds, although the fact to which he proceeds to refer—"Lennox being in great want of money borrowed five hundred crowns from Maitland"—would seem, on the contrary, to imply very confidential relations.<sup>1</sup> The Lennox faction, it need not be doubted, had done their utmost to

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 24th October, 3d November 1564, 3d May 1565. Throckmorton, writing a few weeks after the last letter, suggested that Elizabeth and her Council should express their surprise that Lethington, being a man of knowledge and judgment, could

be so blinded as to further this marriage,—"whereof besides your certain intelligence from hence, you did too well espy in his last legation" to England. Throckmorton's Memorial, 27th May 1565: Keith, ii. 289.

secure Maitland's adhesion. The Cumbernauld Flemings were the natural allies of the Lennox Stuarts; after the marriage, Lord Fleming, "now in principal credit with our young king," was made Chamberlain;<sup>1</sup> and Mary Fleming, to whom Maitland was already devoted, was possibly induced to use her influence with her lover. It was rumoured, indeed, that as early as 1562 Maitland had been in communication with the Lady Margaret Douglas;<sup>2</sup> she had sent him by Melville a watch set with rubies and diamonds; and we know that Lennox himself on his arrival in Scotland gave the Secretary "a very fair diamond in a ring." These judicious courtesies were gracefully acknowledged when Maitland delivered the "oration" to the Estates on the occasion of Lennox's restoration. He had been commanded by Mary, he said, to take the Chancellor's place, and to state somewhat more at large the reasons which induced her to comply with the Queen of England's desire that the Earl should be restored to his honours and estates. Many respects would have inclined her to accede to the request, as the antiquity of his house, the surname he bears, his close affinity to herself, the affectionate urgency of Elizabeth, whose earnest commendation

<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 31st July 1565. | <sup>2</sup> Calderwood, ii. 203.

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had not been of least moment ; but besides that, he continued, the Queen was naturally inclined to pity the decline of noble houses, and had far more pleasure in advancing the ancient blood than in witnessing the decay and overthrow of any good race. Then with a compliment to the gentle nature and prudent government which had brought about their present felicity—“*peace with all foreign nations, and quietness among ourselves in such sort that it might be truly affirmed that in living memory Scotland had never been in greater tranquillity*”—he concluded by exhorting them to give no heed to false bruits and rumours, which were the most pestilent evils that could afflict a Commonwealth.<sup>1</sup>

Yet Maitland, though he favoured Darnley, was prepared to take Leicester on one condition,—the recognition of Mary's title. Both Mary and Maitland, from the first, had been sufficiently plain-spoken. “Now think you, Master Randolph,” the Queen had said, addressing the English envoy, “that it will be honorable in me to debase my state and marry one of her subjects? Is this conformable to her promise to use me as a daughter or a sister?”<sup>2</sup> Maitland had expressed himself in similar terms ; and their repugnance to an unworthy alliance had never been

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<sup>1</sup> Robertson, i. 278.

<sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 30th March 1564.

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disguised. But if by means of Leicester the Scottish succession could be assured, both Mary and Maitland, it is probable, would have accepted Elizabeth's terms. Maitland, however, was not to be satisfied with "parables"; he must know where he stood; and Cecil's assurances were studiously ambiguous. He implored him to be frank. "If a conjunction be really meant, I doubt not but you will find conformity enough on our part; but if time be always driven without further effect than hath yet followed, I am of opinion he shall in the end think himself most happy who hath least meddled in the matter. Gentle letters, good words, and pleasant messages, be good means to begin friendship among princes; but I take them to be too slender bands to hold it fast. In these great causes between our sovereigns I have ever found that fault with you that as in your letters you always wrote obscurely, so in private communications you seldom uttered your own judgment: you might well *academico more* dispute *in utramque partem*, leaving me in suspense to collect what I could. Marry," he concludes somewhat bitterly, after hinting that he will be driven to adopt a like reserve, "I fear the common affairs do not fare a whit the better for our too great wariness."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lethington to Cecil, 6th June 1564.

Cecil, however, could not afford to be frank, for Elizabeth was still trifling with Mary;—of that there can be now no doubt. But her own position was sufficiently embarrassing,—each step only leading her further into the mire. Out of the “labyrinth” into which she had wandered, there was at last indeed no “outgait” that she could see. Cecil had been ailing, and she wrote to him in dire perplexity. “In ejusmodi laberintho posita sum de responso meo reddendo Reginæ Scotiæ, ut nescio quomodo illi satisfaciam, quum neque toto isto tempore illi ullum responsum dederim, nec quid mihi dicendum nunc sciam. Invenias igitur aliquid boni quod in mandatis scriptis Randoll dare possem, et in hac causa tuam opinionem mihi indica.”<sup>1</sup> What was she to say? Could Cecil invent some excuse? She was at her wits’ end. The secret conference at Berwick—where Maitland and Moray were pitted gainst Bedford and Randolph—only increased the irritation. Cecil had anticipated that it “would not succeed,” and on receiving Randolph’s report, he wrote the violent letter of the advocate who, feeling that he has no case, prudently takes the initiative, and abuses his adversary. “What is to be thought of their conduct in the late Conference at Ber-

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth to Cecil, 23d September 1564.

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wick? Surely my Lord of Lethington knows how to make a bargain. As they mean now to fall roundly to work, so will we also. The Queen was loth to meddle in their sovereign's marriage; but being required, she gave her advice, and named a noble gentleman, noble in all qualities requisite, and comparable to any prince born; and now they must have the establishment of their Queen's title as second to her Majesty."<sup>1</sup> Randolph informed Cecil that "the two Lords had been worked up into great agonies and passions" by his insulting message; but there is no trace of bitterness in Maitland's dignified reply. Cecil might in fewer lines, he observed, have comprehended matter more to their contentation. They were unwilling to give their sovereign advice to do that which might be dishonourable and unsafe. Cecil had said that he would write plainly; but there were in his letter as many ambiguities as words; and until these were cleared up, no progress could be made.<sup>2</sup> The official letter was temperate; the confidential letter which accompanied it was still more conciliatory. "The matter itself hath not so many difficulties, but you may soon remove

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<sup>1</sup> Cecil to Maitland and Moray, 16th December 1564. | <sup>2</sup> Maitland and Moray to Cecil, 24th December 1564.

them all if you list.”<sup>1</sup> How honorable were it, he writes a month later, how honorable were it for them both, if thus the Union of the kingdoms could be compassed. Their fame would outshine that which attached to the men who had most valiantly served Edward in the conquest, and Robert the Bruce in the recovery, of the country.<sup>2</sup> But Maitland was eloquent and urgent in vain; the news from Scotland had apparently reassured Elizabeth; Moray was wavering, Chatelherault was in a panic, Knox and his friends were ready to rise. The time had come, she thought, when—Leicester or no Leicester—she could dictate her own terms; and at last there was abundance of plain speaking. She had not yet made up her mind, she said, whether she would marry or not. She must decline to recognise the Queen of Scots as second person, or to take any measures to settle the succession; meantime she could only say that if Mary would marry Leicester and listen to Knox, something might be done for her by-and-by. Cecil must have been blind indeed if he did not know that a message couched in these terms would of a certainty drive Mary into Darnley’s arms. By a curious, if not suspicious, coinci-

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 25th December 1564.

<sup>2</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 1st February 1565.



dence, Henry Stuart had by this time "received license from the Secretary to come to Scotland," and was now in attendance at Holyrood.<sup>1</sup>

Mary did not disappoint the expectations of Elizabeth. She was bitterly mortified by the message; there were rumours in the palace of vehement "commotion"; for a day and night her passion was extreme. Maitland, who felt that the friendship of the Queens was wrecked, could not counsel any further delay. The Queen must marry; and by accident or of design, Elizabeth and Cecil had directed all eyes to Darnley. As Darnley's first night in Scotland had been spent at Lethington, Maitland, we may presume, was still anxious to be friendly. It was otherwise with Moray. His feud with Knox had been healed. He was again "suspected to be led by England."<sup>2</sup> The rumours, so persistent at every crisis, that he aimed at the Crown were again in the air. He had given Cecil to understand during the previous summer that Lennox might be permitted to return to Scotland without any danger to the reformation; now he told his sister that he durst not consent to her marriage with one "who he could not assure himself

<sup>1</sup> Randolph, writing on 20th April, refers to the common suspicion of Elizabeth's object in sending Darnley to Scotland.

See also his letter of 15th April.

<sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 8th May 1565.

would set forth Christ's true religion." Although the Proclamation of 1561 had been quite recently renewed, and the severe penalties against the celebration of their rites had been so rigidly enforced that the Ayrshire Catholics had been driven (like the Ayrshire Covenanters a century later by Claverhouse's dragoons) to meet their priests "in secret houses, in barns, in woods, and on hills,"<sup>1</sup> Moray professed to be confident that if the Queen married Darnley the Protestants "were undone."<sup>2</sup>

Those who believe that Moray was sincerely alarmed for Protestantism should turn to the correspondence of the previous year to which I have just referred. Knox had written a wild letter to Elizabeth protesting against the return of Lennox. Elizabeth appears to have been impressed by the appeal, and Cecil was directed to suggest to Maitland that Mary's consent to his return might be withdrawn. It was then that Moray as well as Maitland remonstrated with the English ministers. The sudden change in Elizabeth's mind, Maitland wrote, was not a little marvellous to him, "seeing how earnestly

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 1st May 1563. The priests, we learn, had been apprehended and punished. | their reasons for rising made by the Lords at Dumfries, 19th September 1565. Calderwood, ii. 569.

<sup>2</sup> See also the statement of

her Majesty did recommend unto me my Lord of Lennox's cause and my lady's at my last being in Court ; nay, suddenly after I had taken my leave you yourself, at her Majesty's commandment, did send after me by post her letters to the Queen's Majesty, my mistress, very affectionate in their favour, willing me to present the same with recommendation from the Queen. And now, having once, under her great seal, permitted him liberally to come, it will be a hard matter to persuade my mistress to revoke it ; and I dare little presume to enter into any such communication with her Majesty, knowing how much she doth respect her honour where promise is once passed, and how unwilling she is to change her deliberations being once resolved ; which as she will not do herself, so doth she altogether mislike in others. The religion here doth not depend upon my Lord of Lennox's coming, neither do those of the religion hang upon the sleeves of any one or two that may mislike his coming. For us, whether he come or do not come, I take to be no great matter, up or down." <sup>1</sup> Moray was quite as decided.

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 13th July 1564. He adds that if Elizabeth really wished to stay him, Mary would "forbid it for her pleasure," but an official

request to that effect must be made, as she could not otherwise withdraw her promise. Elizabeth as usual was burrowing in the dark.

“As to the faction that his coming might make for the matters of religion, thanks to God our foundation is not so weak that we have cause to fear if he had the greatest subject of this realm joined to him, *seeing we have the favour of our prince, and liberty of conscience in such abundance as our hearts can wish.* It will neither be he nor I, praised be God, can hinder or alter religion here-away; and his coming or remaining in that cause will be to small purpose.”<sup>1</sup>

It is hard to believe, with these letters before us, that Moray was in earnest when he opposed the Lennox marriage on the plea that religion was in peril. I am, for my part, constrained to believe that the pretence of religion was a mask.

Maitland, however, did not even yet despair of a pacific settlement of the difficulty. He could not bring himself to suspect that Cecil had all along been working for Mary's ruin; and it appeared to him that if Darnley was obnoxious to Elizabeth, and Leicester obnoxious to Mary, some other suitor could be found who might be agreeable to both. He went to England in May,—the object of his mission being, as has generally been supposed, to win Elizabeth's consent at the eleventh hour to the Lennox marriage. But there is an entry in Cecil's

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<sup>1</sup> Moray to Cecil, 13th July 1564.

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diary which gives a different complexion to the negotiations, and which has not hitherto, so far as I know, been noticed by the historians of the period. "May 6. Lethington in England. Treated of Leicester marriage; but he liked it not, but treated for the Duke of Norfolk, which was then refused."<sup>1</sup> *He liked it not; but treated for the Duke of Norfolk.* I conclude from this that Mary up to the beginning of May was not bent upon Darnley,—that, on the contrary, if one of the great English nobles had been acceptable to Elizabeth, she was ready to take him. The secret overture did not succeed; and during Maitland's absence Mary's indignation got the better of her judgment. Her passion boiled over; and on his way home he was met by a messenger from the Scottish Court, who brought with him an angry letter from the Queen. She would marry where she liked, and would be fed by Yea and Nay no longer. Lethington was to return to Elizabeth and tell her so to her face. There was to be no more trifling. The letter had obviously been dashed off in a moment of excessive irritation,—“it wanted neither eloquence, despite, anger, love, nor passion.”<sup>2</sup> It was accompanied by another more

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<sup>1</sup> Cecil's Journal is printed  
by Murdin.

<sup>2</sup> Throckmorton to Leicester  
, and Cecil, 11th May.



purely personal (such as Mary delighted to address to her favourites);—written with her own hand, it was, said Throckmorton, “the most favourable and gentle letter that ever Queen did address to her servant.” But Maitland, now seriously alarmed for his mistress’s safety, instead of returning to London, hurried on to Alnwick, where he overtook the English envoy. They arrived at Edinburgh together, and Lethington, finding that the Court was at Stirling, left Throckmorton in the capital, and went on alone. He was unusually moved. Elizabeth had told him in effect that the Lennox marriage would be taken as a declaration of war. Then there was treason at home,—Knox had been consistently hostile, and even Moray could no longer be trusted. Was it possible that Mary could weather the storm that was brewing? His remonstrances were not wholly without effect; both Throckmorton and Randolph told Cecil that if Elizabeth were liberal a reasonable “composition” could be effected.<sup>1</sup> But at the English Court there was no sincere desire for a composition, — the information from Scotland leading Cecil to believe that Mary was certain to be worsted. The opportunity for which he had waited so long was not to be missed. So,

<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 7th July. Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 21st May.

on the 8th of June, Elizabeth, "understanding that by the marriage with Lord Darnley the cause of religion shall be desturbed," instructed Randolph "to encourage all those who were well-minded to preserve the same, *and to assure them of her support*,"—assurances which, during the next four or five months, were constantly repeated. It is said that she gave them good words and good wishes only; but this is a mistake; with unwonted liberality she supplied the funds that they needed.<sup>1</sup> The dogs of war were let loose—not for the first, nor for the last, time—by Elizabeth. During the next eight years, with hardly an interval of quiet, the wretched country, which, as we have seen, had never been more peaceful or prosperous than under Maitland's vigorous, and Mary's "gentle," government, was delivered over to Anarchy.

Though Maitland's anxiety for cautious dealing may be approved by the historian, it does not appear to have been well taken by the Queen. Randolph asserts that the conduct of public affairs was now committed to Rizzio,

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<sup>1</sup> Of this there is plenty of evidence; for instance, there is a petition to Elizabeth from two Scotsmen, who complain that they had been put to the last extremity by their sovereign, in consequence of having conveyed an aid of money sent by her Majesty through Mr Tamworth, the special envoy, to the Earl of Moray. August 1565. See also Elizabeth to Bedford, Sept. 2.

and that Lethington had leisure to make love.<sup>1</sup> Whatever the cause, it is tolerably certain that for some months Mary withdrew, or appeared to withdraw, her confidence from Maitland. She may have resented his abrupt return from his English mission. She may have felt that one who had been so closely associated with Moray was not a counsellor who could be intrusted with State secrets when Moray was in the field. The crafty Italian, for his part, may have thought to secure his own place, and enhance his own consequence, by inciting her against her Minister. And there could be little in common between the wilful and petulant lad who had been raised by Mary's favour to the giddy eminence which turned his foolish head and the acutest statesman of the age. Lethington continued to act as principal Secretary of State; the public duties of the office were duly discharged by him; but there is certainly reason to believe that the close intimacy which

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<sup>1</sup> From the 17th of March, the approximate date of the rupture, the reader must be on his guard against a too ready acceptance of Randolph's narrative. Thenceforth he was entirely under the influence of the faction opposed to Mary, and every action of the Queen

was distorted by a distempered and jaundiced eye. "So," Mr Froude admits, "she may have appeared in Randolph's eyes; and yet the change may have been more in Randolph's power of insight than in the object at which he looked."—Froude, viii. 177.



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had hitherto been encouraged by the Queen was temporarily interrupted. He had felt that the risks she was running were too great; and he had not hesitated to speak his mind.

The risk was great; but intimate as he had been with the Queen, he hardly knew as yet the stuff of which she was made. The insurrection was nipped in the bud. The disaffected Lords were driven across the Border. Before the end of the autumn Elizabeth was suing for Mary's friendship, and Moray had abjectly besought Rizzio to intercede for him with his sister. It is true that the nation as a whole went with Mary; the country was more prosperous and peaceful than it had been in the memory of living men; and the pretences which had been put forward by "the professors" were too crude and frivolous to mislead. But it was the high spirit of the Queen herself,—her daring courage, her readiness, her resource,—that crushed the rebels. Others might doubt and delay; but Mary, with Darnley at her side, was ready for any adventure. "And albeit the most part waxed weary, yet the Queen's courage increased manlike, so much that she was ever with the foremost."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 500.

## CHAPTER THREE.

### THE CONSPIRACIES OF THE NOBLES.

FROM the time of the Run-about-Raid—as Moray's rising was named—till Mary's faction on Maitland's death was finally stamped out, the history of Scotland is hopelessly monotonous. The persistent efforts of Cecil and Knox to discredit the Queen were ultimately attended with success, though Mary's power of recovery was really surprising. The contest, indeed, was not so unequal as it might seem; for there can be little doubt that, till the very last, the mass of the Scottish people were warmly attached to their Sovereign. Unhappily for her cause the political force of the country was practically concentrated in "Fife and the Lothians." The Fife gentry, the Lothian burghers, were stout soldiers as well as ardent "professors," and a summons from Moray and Morton could bring together a couple of thousand men "weill bodin in feir of war" in eight-and-forty hours. It was

England, however, that turned the scale against Mary. Without the aid of Cecil, Moray and Morton would unquestionably have failed. There is abundance of evidence to show that Knox and his friends were acutely conscious that outside a narrow area they had a scanty following. A wide democratic franchise would probably have arrested the Reformation; and we shall see as we proceed that, had the Scots been left to fight it out among themselves, Mary would have been Queen till she died. Maitland was devoted to his mistress; but knowing that with England actively hostile, her ultimate success was impossible, he strove to disarm its hostility. He would have welcomed the closest union; but when friendliness was no longer to be looked for, he only asked to be let alone.

The historian should as far as possible keep his mind clear of theories; but the historian who recognises in the Run-about-Raid, the Rizzio murder, the Darnley murder, the Bothwell catastrophe, a uniformity of motive—the animosity of Knox and the duplicity of Elizabeth, as well as the indiscretion of Mary—will be able to maintain his thesis by many cogent arguments.

While the virulence of Knox was mainly polemical, Cecil's hostility was serious and statesmanlike. An English Minister was entitled to hold that, while the wave of Conservative

reaction was sweeping over Europe, Mary was a constant danger to England. It is the methods of the English Government that are fairly open to criticism. We hear enough of Mary's bad faith ; but Mary's bad faith was pellucid candour when compared with the rank dishonesty of her cousin. Hardly, indeed, in the whole annals of diplomacy can a parallel be found for the unblushing mendacity of Elizabeth.

Maitland was not easily discouraged ; but he was ill at ease after the Lennox marriage. He was not misled by Mary's rapid progress and brilliant peremptoriness. She had spoken with the spirit of a Queen ; neither France nor England, she had declared, should come between her and her revolted subjects ; and he could not but admire the force and independence of her bearing. But it was not diplomacy. He knew that on these lines no solid or permanent success was to be looked for. Mary could not afford the luxury of humiliating her formidable rival ; had she been discreet she would have held her tongue, and preserved, while she went her own way, a show of amity with England. But she was a woman—an angry woman—with weak and evil counsellors at her side. It appeared only too probable that Darnley and Rizzio between them would drive Elizabeth, irresolute as she was, into active intervention. Maitland

looked on anxiously; but the Queen was still cold and suspicious. It was alleged that he was well affected to the rebels. Letters came to him from Moray. So, though he continued to attend the meetings of the Privy Council, his advice was seldom asked. It was at this time that Randolph wrote,—“My old friend Lethington has leisure to make love; and in the end, I believe, as wise as he is, he will show himself a very fool and stark staring mad.”<sup>1</sup> (Whether it was love or politics that was to drive him out of his senses, does not clearly appear.) When Tamworth went down to Scotland at the time of the Run-about-Raid, Maitland, however, was still in close attendance upon the Queen. Mary gave him permission to see the English envoy, to whom he spoke with his usual frankness. “Upon Sunday last, at night,” Tamworth wrote,<sup>2</sup> “I arrived here in Edinburgh, very weary by reason of a number of evil horses that I found by the way. The next day I reposed myself, as well to consider upon those matters committed to my charge, as by the advice of Mr Randolph to talk with the Lord of Lethington, who durst not have to do with us, until such time as he knew the Queen his mistress’s pleasure.

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 31st October 1565.

<sup>2</sup> Tamworth and Randolph to Cecil, 10th August 1565.

Having obtained leave of her Grace, he came to us, with whom we could not have so much talk as we desired ; but thus much in effect by him we did understand, that there was very little hope of any reconciliation between the Queen and the Earl of Moray. By him also do we find that so great matter of misliking hath proceeded from the Queen, the Earl of Lennox, and Lord Darnley towards the noblemen of this country, that there is entered such a hatred into their hearts, and such mistrust," that no communication was possible. "She remaineth always in mind to pursue them to the uttermost." This was in August ; throughout the winter Maitland remained at his post—ill at ease, as I have said ; yet it is clear from the terms of the letter he wrote to Cecil early in 1566,<sup>1</sup> that he had begun to hope that more friendly relations were being established. "I was glad to understand by your letter sent to me with our herald, your good continuance in your accustomed disposition to nourish amity betwixt the two Queens and Realms. I am assured there is no amity so profitable for both ; as also, if any breach come at any time (which God forbid), it shall be most dangerous to both. And therefore, happy may the Ministers be accounted, who shall

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<sup>1</sup> 9th February 1566.

have credit to do good offices betwixt them. I am sorry that any occasion to the contrary has been thought to have fallen out. Yet, praised be God, nothing is on either part so far past, but all may be reduced to the former estate if the right way be taken. Marry, I see no certain way unless we chop at the very root ; you know where it lieth, and so far as my judgment can reach, the sooner all things be packed up, the less danger there is of any inconveniences. The bearer can declare to you my opinion, whom I pray you to credit. This letter shall only serve as a gage of my correspondence to your disposition in all things that may tend to quiet the two Realms, and unite the two Queens in perfect accord. As occasion shall serve, I will make you overtures to that end, desiring you to do the like unto me ; and by that means renew our old intelligence, which shall bring forth fruit when it shall please God to prosper our counsels. In the meantime let us omit no lawful means, and remit the success to Him who hath their hearts in His hand, and shall move them as pleaseth Him. Many considerations do move me to write thus earnestly, which I am assured yourself will approve. So I take my leave.”<sup>1</sup>

So much for Maitland. The other actors in

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 9th February 1565.

what was rapidly becoming a strangely exciting and tragic story were widely distributed and variously occupied. Moray and his friends were in England; Morton and Ruthven, who had fallen away from them, were with the Court; so were the nobles personally and politically attached to the Queen,—Huntly, Athol, Bothwell, Sutherland, Caithness. Knox had ventured to remain in Edinburgh, and preached occasionally in St Giles'. Before the close of the year 1565 Darnley and Rizzio had ceased to be allies; and Rizzio, as the only official at Holyrood who could conduct her foreign correspondence, was becoming indispensable to the Queen. There had been rumours of contention between husband and wife, —*amantium iræ*, as Randolph said,—and the feeble and petted lad, who owed everything to Mary, was already plotting against her. It was also rumoured—before the year was out, indeed, it was widely known—that in a few months Mary would be a mother.

When Moray was driven across the Border, the revolutionary faction had been foiled for the moment. But with Moray at Newcastle, Cecil at Westminster, Morton at Holyrood, and Knox in St Giles', there was plenty of explosive material about. No experienced statesman, no friend of orderly government, could venture to hope that the clouds had been finally dispersed. The



storm had failed to clear the sky; the air was still charged with electricity. The stress of the political situation indeed might not inaptly have been described in the words of the great English poet; for though "the vanward clouds of evil days had spent their malice," yet

"The sullen rear  
Was with its storèd thunder labouring up."

Moray's rôle during his exile was not one that any man of spirit would have cared to play. There are scenes of broad burlesque in "Lear" and "Macbeth"; and the tragedy which was so close at hand was preceded by a farce, in which the clown's part was taken by Moray. The ambassadors of the Catholic Powers had not hesitated to accuse the English Queen to her face of fomenting civil war in Scotland. The ill success of the rebels had by this time dismayed Elizabeth; and when Moray came to London to remind her of her engagements, she induced him to declare on his knees, in the presence of the ambassadors, that she had given the Lords no encouragement. "But unto my Lord of Moray, she said, Now you have told the truth, for neither did I, nor any in my name, stir you up against your Queen. For your abominable treason may serve for example to my own subjects to rebel against me. Therefore get you out of my pres-

ence,—you are but unworthy traitors.”<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth’s transcendent mendacity rose at intervals into genius; and on this occasion she outshone herself. But if Elizabeth lied as was her habit—what is to be said for Moray? Elizabeth was not “a professor”; she sneered at Cecil and “his brothers in Christ”; but Moray was the leader of the “precise Protestants,” and the austere propriety of his life and conversation had supplied a text for many a fervid discourse. The interview with Elizabeth was bad enough—one would have fancied that he could not have fallen further—yet, if we are to believe Melville, there was a lower depth which Moray had yet to sound. “Rizzio appeared also to have been gained. My Lord Moray had sued to him very earnestly, and more humbly than could have been believed, with the present of a fair diamond enclosed within a letter, full of repentance and fair promises from that time forth to be his friend and protector.”<sup>2</sup> How these “promises” were kept will appear immediately; but anything more meanly abject than Moray’s bearing when overtaken by evil fortune it is surely difficult to imagine.

But though Moray was disowned in public,

<sup>1</sup> Melville’s *Memoirs*, p. 57. There are many reports of this interview—an official narrative

was prepared by Cecil.

<sup>2</sup> Melville’s *Memoirs*, p. 63.

the English Ministers, whose hostility to Mary had not been disarmed, was in fact keener than ever, were in close and constant communication with the exiled lords. Before the new year was far advanced, Elizabeth, recovering from her panic, had urged Mary to pardon the noblemen whose excessive zeal for religion had led them astray. Mary would probably have turned a deaf ear to these somewhat dictatorial entreaties,<sup>1</sup> in so far at least as Moray was concerned; for the ingratitude of her brother had stung her to the quick. She had replied with spirit to Elizabeth's remonstrances at a far more critical period; the hypocritical pretences of the English Ministers had then been ruthlessly exposed; and we may be tolerably sure that now, when her enemies had been scattered like chaff, her answer would have been not less incisive.<sup>2</sup> But the letters were never delivered; Bedford detained them at Berwick on the ground that "a matter of no small consequence was intended in Scotland,"

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth to Mary, 24th February and 3d March 1566.

<sup>2</sup> See the Instructions to Tamworth in August 1565, and Mary's reply, in which she points out that "she has never been curious in times bypast to inquire what order of government Elizabeth maintained

in her ain realm," and "desires maist heartily her good sister to meddle no further" with Moray and the other rebels than she herself had heretofore meddled with the subjects of the English Queen.—Keith, iii. 231.

by means whereof, he explained, the banished Lords would be brought home "without further suit from Elizabeth."<sup>1</sup>

The "matter of no small consequence" was the plot which ended in the murder of Rizzio and the return of Moray. Though Morton and Ruthven, who were closely related to Darnley, had fallen away from Moray when he appeared in the field against his sister, the friendly intimacy which had previously existed between them had been only temporarily suspended. The division was accidental; the differences were superficial; there was no reason, apart from Darnley, why the old allies—Knox and Moray and Morton and Ruthven—should not shake hands, and be friends again.

The earlier historians of Scotland were only permitted to call a spade a spade when no reflection on Knox and his friends was intended. A fairer estimate is now possible; and it will be admitted by not a few that Moray's conduct at this juncture was singularly base. We have seen that he had perjured himself to satisfy Elizabeth, and had pled with Rizzio for pardon.<sup>2</sup> But these were comparatively venial offences,—matters of taste, so to speak, where private in-

<sup>1</sup> Bedford to Cecil, 6th March 1566.

had implored Elizabeth to intercede for him with Mary. See

<sup>2</sup> We know, besides, that he

his letter of 31st Dec. 1565.

clination might be consulted. The broad Earldom of Moray, which a year before had cost him the friendship of Knox, was in jeopardy, and the temptation to retain it by any means "fair or foul" was probably irresistible. Yet what he now did, justified though it has been by those who maintain that Moray, like Arthur, was a stainless gentleman, wellnigh exceeds belief. He had risen in arms against his sister—he had shaken her throne—because she had elected to marry Darnley. He returned to make Darnley king, in fact as well as in name. The terms of the treaty between these singular allies were reduced to writing, in accordance with the fashion of an age which combined lawless violence with legal pedantry. These are the Articles of the "Band" which Moray signed:—"The Earl of Moray shall become a true subject and faithful servant to the noble and mighty Prince Henry, King of Scotland,—shall be the friend of his friends and the enemy of his enemies. He shall at the first Parliament after his return grant, give, and ordain the Matrimonial Crown to the said noble Prince all the days of his life.<sup>1</sup> He shall fortify and maintain the said noble

<sup>1</sup> What was meant by the Matrimonial Crown is not very clear. In a limited sense Darnley was already King, and what he now sought must have been a radical title to the Crown independent of Mary.



Prince in his just title to the Crown of Scotland, failing of succession of our Sovereign Lady, and shall justify and set forward the same to the uttermost.<sup>1</sup> And as he has become true subject to the said noble Prince, so shall he not spare life or limb in setting forward all that may tend to the advancement of his honour." Darnley on his side undertook that Moray and his "complices" should be recalled to Scotland; that their treason should be forgiven; and that the Acts of the Estates by which their honours and estates were to be forfeited should be immediately withdrawn.<sup>2</sup>

A more shameful bargain was never struck. The fanatical passion of Knox may be held to excuse his complicity. The chosen people had no scruple in putting the unpopular favourite of an idolatrous ruler to death, and Mary was the Jezebel of the Reformer's disordered imagination. For the cold and scrupulous Moray no

<sup>1</sup> This article was directed against the title of Chatelherault, who, on account of his connection with Moray's rebellion, was now in exile. In this singular fashion Moray repaid the services of his friends. Mr Froude says that Chatelherault had been allowed to return; but it appears (Douglas Peerage, i. 700) that Mary had pardoned

him on condition that he would live abroad. See also his letters to Elizabeth and Cecil from Newcastle and Dieppe, 3d Dec. 1565, and 24th July 1566.

<sup>2</sup> The Articles of Agreement are to be found in Ruthven's Narrative (Keith, iii. 261). Randolph sent a copy of them to Cecil.

such apology can be found. Had it not been established by indisputable evidence, the allegation that the *vir pietate gravis* of the "precise Protestants" of Scotland was ready to cement in Rizzio's blood an alliance with Darnley, would have been deemed incredible.

The assassination of Rizzio, the return of Moray, the proclamation of Darnley, were only the accidents of the conspiracy. The plot had a wider scope. It was unquestionably directed against the Queen herself. Had Mary and Darnley been captured as they hurried past Kinross during the previous summer, the Queen, it is known, would have been imprisoned in Lochleven. Since then the situation had been materially modified. Mary was now within a few months of her confinement. The probability that a violent mental or physical shock would be attended with serious consequences, might be followed by her death, cannot have been absent from the minds of the conspirators.<sup>1</sup> Randolph's sinister auguries were like enough to be realised. "I know that there are practices in hand contrived between the father and the son to come by the Crown against her will. I know that if that take effect which

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<sup>1</sup> "She being big with child, it appeared to be done to destroy both her and her child. For they might have killed the  
said Rizzio in any other part, at any time they pleased. (Melville's Memoirs, p. 67.)

is intended, David shall have his throat cut within these ten days. Many things grievouser and worse than these are brought to my ears, yea, of things intended against her own person, which because I think it better to keep secret than write to Mr Secretary, I speak of them but now to your Lordship."<sup>1</sup> What then would follow? Chatelherault was in exile; Darnley was incapable of governing. Cordially supported by Elizabeth, Moray was sure to become a formidable candidate for the throne. Cecil had said years before that the Lord James was like to be a king soon; and—Mary once out of the way—a parliament filled with fanatical partisans would have little difficulty in finding that he was legitimate.

These then were the confederates. Moray and his companions at Newcastle, Bedford and Randolph, the agents of Elizabeth, at Berwick, Morton, Ruthven, and Knox at Edinburgh, were leagued with the worthless Darnley and the ungrateful Lennox. There was little delay. They did not linger over their work. By the 6th of March the preliminaries had been completed. The capital was filled with the angry zealots of the Congregation. Judicial precedents selected from the bloodiest passages of Hebrew history

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Leicester, 13th February 1566.



had fanned their fanaticism into a flame. During a week of fasting and humiliation they had fed upon the atrocities recorded in the earlier books of the Bible. These grim enthusiasts streaming out into the High Street from the great church where Knox had told them how Oreb and Zeeb had been slain, how the Benjamites had been cut off, how Haman had been hanged, were in the mood for murder. On the last day of the week in the winter twilight two hundred armed men wearing the livery of Morton and Lindsay surrounded the palace. The attack being utterly unexpected, there was no resistance. The gates were closed and barred; the courtyard was occupied; while Ruthven with some score of his friends, guided by Darnley, stole noiselessly up the narrow stair which led to the private apartments of the Queen. It was about seven o'clock—Mary was at supper. Darnley entered first; but he had hardly uttered a word when the Queen looking up beheld a ghastly apparition at the open door,—Ruthven in complete armour, but pale and emaciated, for he was suffering from mortal illness, and had risen from his deathbed to direct the murder,—the man whom with a true instinct she had always loathed. “The Queen cannot abide him, and all men hate him.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 3d June 1563.

Of the miserable tragedy which followed enough has been written. The outraged Queen standing undauntedly before the craven creature who clung in abject terror to the skirt of her robe, and whose worst crime had been his devotion to herself—the brief unseemly scuffle in almost absolute darkness, for the table with the lights had been overturned, and the Countess of Argyle had picked up a single taper—Mary dragged aside by Ruthven, and thrust roughly into Darnley's arms—the victim hustled across the floor—the shrill cry for mercy—the clash of arms on the stair-head;—it is a lurid picture never to be forgotten. Ruthven was the leading actor; and there are some sentences in his curiously unimpassioned narrative which are yet startlingly vivid.

“Then her Majesty rose upon her feet, and stood before David, he holding her Majesty by the plates of her gown, leaning back over the window, his dagger drawn in his hand; and one of the chamber began to lay hands on the Lord Ruthven, none of the King's party being there present. Then the said Lord Ruthven pulled out his dagger, and defended himself until more came in, and said to them, Lay no hands on me, for I will not be handled. At the coming in of the others the Lord Ruthven put up his dagger; and with the rushing in of men, the board fell

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to the wall, meat and candles being thereon, and the Lady of Argile took one of the candles in her hand. At the same instant the Lord Ruthven took the Queen in his arms, and put her into the King's arms, beseeching her Majesty not to be afraid; and assured her that all that was done was the King's own deed." Then after David had been dragged away, "the said Lord Ruthven being sore felled with his sickness and wearied with his travel, desired her Majesty's pardon to sit down, and called for drink for God's sake; so a Frenchman brought him a cup of wine, and after he drank, her Majesty began to rail at him, saying, Is this your sickness? He answered, God forbid your Majesty had such a sickness. Then the Queen said, if she died of her child or her Commonweal perished, she would leave the revenge to her friends to be taken of the Lord Ruthven and his posterity." At last she broke down. "Then the Lord Ruthven perceiving that her Majesty was very sick, he said to the King it was best to take leave of her Majesty, that she might take her rest." So they left her with her ladies and gentlewomen. "The gates being locked, the King being in his bed, the Queen walking in her chamber, the Lord Ruthven took charge of the lower gate and the privy passages; and David was thrown down the stairs from the Palace

where he was slain, and brought to the Porter's lodge, who taking off his clothes, said, This was his destiny. For upon this chest was his first bed when he came to this place, and now he lieth a very niggard and misknown knave. The King's dagger was found sticking in his side. The Queen enquired at the King where his dagger was? who answered, that he wist not well. Well, said the Queen, it will be known hereafter."<sup>1</sup>

Was Maitland one of the conspirators? Was he directly or indirectly implicated in the plot? The allegation of his complicity, so far as I can judge, rests upon circumstantial evidence only. His name is included in Randolph's list of the confederates; and Darnley assured Mary that her Secretary had taken an active part in the conduct of the plot. He was the friend of Ruthven: he was the friend of Moray. He disliked and suspected Rizzio, who was his political, if not his personal, rival. Rizzio, he knew, was doing what he could to embitter the relations between the Queens. The English alliance (his own handiwork) had been put in peril; but if the Italian secretary were removed, the danger might be averted. There is an enigmatical and ambiguous letter addressed by him to Cecil, in

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<sup>1</sup> Keith, iii. 361.

which, as we have seen, some radical cure is not obscurely hinted at. When he declared that there was no certain way unless they chopped at the root, had Maitland the violent removal of Rizzio in view?<sup>1</sup> It need not surprise us, in short, that grave suspicion should have attached to him. Circumstanced as he was, it was impossible that he should have escaped suspicion.

Yet when carefully considered, the evidence is not conclusive. There are several circumstances (whose cumulative value is considerable) which tend to displace the presumption. Randolph, who was at Berwick, had for some months been writing rather wildly about Scotch affairs; and Darnley's testimony is absolutely worthless. His unfriendliness to Maitland was notorious; he appears to have lost no opportunity of turning Mary against her most capable Minister. We are expressly told that the Queen was always well disposed to Maitland, and that, but for Darnley, no unkindness would have arisen between him and his mistress. He did not sign the "bands" to which Darnley, Morton, and Moray were parties. His name does not occur in the Privy Council order of 19th March, nor in the subsequent order of 8th June;—both of which were directed against

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<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 158.



the persons accessory to Rizzio's slaughter. The omission cannot have been accidental; for the lists contain upwards of one hundred names, and are obviously exhaustive. As his name was not included, the incriminating evidence, to say the least, must have been considered defective. A detailed account of the whole affair was sent by Mary on 2d April to her ambassador in France; but she makes no mention of Lethington.<sup>1</sup> It may be said that these omissions go merely to show that Maitland, like Knox, was not actively engaged in the murder. But the curious narrative by Ruthven from which I have quoted, and which is unquestionably authentic, contains several allusions to "the Secretary," which could hardly have been introduced had the Secretary been engaged. Athol, Bothwell, and Huntly were in the palace; but they knew nothing of the plot; and Ruthven leads the reader to infer that Maitland, who was extremely intimate with Athol (Athol having married a Fleming), was

<sup>1</sup> Her narrative confirms the general accuracy of Ruthven's, —except in so far as it indicates that more violence was used against herself. Rizzio, for safety, having retreated behind her, Ruthven, she says, "with his complices cast down our table upon ourself, put violent hands on him, struck

him over our shoulders with whinzeards, one part of them standing before our face with bended daggs." She adds that the Lords proposed if she would not consent to give the whole government to Darnley, "to put us to death or detain us in perpetual captivity."—Keith, ii. 411.

just as ignorant. Ruthven was in the act of assuring Mary that "if anything be done this night which your Majesty mislikes, the King your husband and none of us is in the wyte," when Gray knocked at the door. "At this instant Gray knocked fast at the Queen's door, declaring that the Earls of Huntly, Athol, Bothwell, Caithness, and Sutherland, the Lords Fleming, Livingston, *the Secretary*, and Tullibardine the Comptroller, with their officers and servants, were fighting in the close against the Earl Morton and his company, being on the King's part." Ruthven hurried down to urge the loyal noblemen (who before he arrived had been driven back by Morton) to keep the peace; and after having succeeded in pacifying Huntly and Bothwell he went on to Athol's room, and "found with the said Earl, the Comptroller, *the Secretary*, James Balfour, and divers others." After a protracted interview, Athol "perceiving all to be the King's own doing, desired Ruthven to go to the King, and obtain leave for him to pass into his own country, *with them that were then in the chamber with him.*" Ruthven conveyed the message to Darnley; and Darnley, after seeing Athol, very unwillingly gave the desired permission, on the understanding that the Earl would return whenever he was required by the Queen. "And the Earl took his leave, and

passed to his chamber ; for he made him ready, and in his company the Earls of Sutherland and Caithness, the Master of Caithness, the *Secretary* and Comptroller, with divers others.”<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to reconcile this narrative with guilty knowledge on Maitland’s part. Ruthven was the prime mover in the plot ; and if Maitland had been an accomplice, Ruthven would hardly have represented him “as fighting in the close against the Earl of Morton.” Another not unimportant piece of evidence is found in Robert Melville’s letter written on 22d October of the same year. Darnley, it appears, had continued

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph’s letter of 27th March represents Lethington as present in the palace next day. “She sendeth for the Lord of Liddington, and in gentle words deviseth with him that he would persuade that she might have her liberty, and the guard that was about her removed, seeing that she had granted their requests. He found it very good.” Wright’s ‘Queen Elizabeth,’ i. 226. But in the same letter it is said that Lethington is “within the Lord Athol’s bounds,” “of whom we hear that he hath accepted a charge from the Queen to enter himself prisoner in Inverness. He was participant of this last

Counsel, discovered by the King’s self.” “Who shall be Secretary we know not, but my Lord of Liddington having such friendship with my Lord of Athol, it is thought that he shall do well enough.” Randolph was at this time at Berwick ;—Mary having sent him out of the country for practising with her rebels. All the other authorities agree that the negotiations were conducted by Darnley ; and the fair conclusion is that Maitland left the palace with Athol, and went to the Highlands, “within the Lord Athol’s bounds,” where he was when the letter was written.



to accuse Maitland; and his persistency had forced Mary to make some inquiry into the truth of the accusations. "The King cannot obtain such things as he seeks; to wit, such persons as the *Secretary*, the *Justice-Clerk*, and *Clerk-Register*, to be put out of their office,—alleging that they were guilty of this last odious fact, *whereof the Queen's Majesty hath taken trial and finds them not guilty therein.*"<sup>1</sup> Buchanan's testimony is to the same effect. Though "chiefest enemy to David after the King's grace," yet not being "advertisit by the Lords" of their enterprise, Maitland took no part in the murder. But he was "suspected of the Queen," and he "fled with the others." Melville adds that he was in danger of his life. "That same night the Earl of Athol, the Laird of Tullibardine, and Secretary Lethington were permitted to retire themselves out of the palace, and were in great fear of their lives."<sup>2</sup>

It has been constantly assumed that Lethington was an actor in the Rizzio tragedy; but the facts to which I have called attention, and which have been hitherto overlooked, are hardly consistent with the popular impression. We know, besides, that he was busy making love to the

<sup>1</sup> Robert Melville to Archbishop Bethune, 22d October 1566. Keith (a copy from the

Scots College, Paris), ii. 461.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan's *Chameleon*. Melville's *Memoirs*, p. 67.

Queen's favourite Mary at the very time when he is accused of plotting against her mistress ; and on the whole, after examination of the conflicting testimony, I incline to hold that his complicity has not been established. He had not, in short, been "advertisit by the Lords."

The conspirators, foiled by Mary's brilliant promptitude, did not reap the harvest on which they had reckoned. Moray, Rothes, Ochiltree, Kirkaldy of Grange, indeed, rode into Edinburgh next day to find the Queen a virtual prisoner in Holyrood. But during the night that followed Mary convinced her foolish husband that he had chosen dangerous allies, as indeed was true enough, and persuaded him to fly with her to Dunbar. For romantic hardihood, there is nothing in her eventful life to compare with that midnight ride across the Lothians. Groping her way through the charnel-house of the Abbey, she reached the gate in the palace wall where Arthur Erskine was waiting. A single sentinel might have stopped her, but they passed unchallenged by friend or foe. Once clear of the palace park and gardens, the open country lay before her, and, mounted behind Erskine, in whose honour she had boundless confidence—"I would trust him with a thousand lives!"—she hurried on to the coast. Bothwell and Huntly, "by leaping over a window toward the little garden

where the Lyons were lodged,"<sup>1</sup> had escaped from the palace immediately after the murder, and were already in the field. In eight-and-forty hours Mary found herself at the head of an army which the Confederates did not dare to face. Retiring from Edinburgh, they dispersed in all directions, the majority seeking the hospitality of Elizabeth, to whose Ministers, as we have seen, the details of the plot had been confidentially communicated some time before its execution. "Upon the xvii day of March, quihlk was Sunday, the hail Lords, committers of the slaughter and crimes above written, with all their complices and men of war, with dolorous hearts departit from Edinburgh toward Linlithgow, at seven hours in the morning. And upon the same day John Knox, minister of Edinburgh, in likewise departit from the said burgh at twa hours afternoon, with ane great murning of the godly of religion."<sup>2</sup>

The Queen was again completely successful; and, bitterly resenting the ingratitude of her husband and the perfidy of her nobles, she might have been expected to punish the violence of which she had been the victim with extreme severity. There can be no doubt that with Athol and Bothwell and Huntly and the whole of the Border clans at her back, she could, had

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<sup>1</sup> Melville, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 94.



she chosen, have sent the insurgent Lords to prison or to the scaffold. But she did not choose. A policy of conciliation was steadily pursued. The treachery of Moray had been a bitter mortification; but Moray was forgiven. So were Rothes, and Ochiltree, and Kirkaldy. She reconciled old enemies; she pacified ancestral feuds. She scattered pardons right and left. She was eager to forget and forgive. Her politic generosity was attended with immediate and gratifying success. Her moderate policy was universally approved. James VI. was born on the 19th of June, and all over Scotland "the fires of joy" were lighted. Elizabeth wept for envy,—*she* was a barren stock, while the Queen of Scots was the mother of a fair son. "I never," Le Croc declared, "saw her Majesty so much beloved, honoured, or esteemed, nor so great a harmony among all her subjects as at present is by her wise conduct; for I cannot perceive the smallest difference or division."<sup>1</sup>

Yet the prospect was not unclouded. Mary's enemies had been baffled for the moment; but the religious and political forces which Knox and Cecil represented remained persistently hostile. Melville (who acted as Secretary in Maitland's absence) had been forced to warn his mistress that "*having so many factious enemies lying in*

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<sup>1</sup> Le Croc to Beaton, 15th October 1566. Keith, ii. 451.

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*wait to make their advantage of the least appearance that can be made,"*<sup>1</sup> she would require to be more than ordinarily circumspect. The slightest indiscretion would be cruelly punished. Was it probable (her friends could not but ask) that a woman like Mary, constitutionally frank, impulsive, and unconventional, would pass through the ordeal unscathed?

The general situation was sufficiently embarrassing; but there were specific difficulties—the alienation of Maitland, the folly of Darnley, the ascendancy of Bothwell, as well as her own impaired health,—which at the close of the year 1566 must have made the most sanguine loyalist regard the future with grave apprehension.

Of these embarrassments indeed one had been removed in the course of the autumn. The differences with Maitland had been composed, and the Queen and her Minister were again in friendly accord.

I have been unable to discover any entirely satisfactory explanation of the motives which induced Maitland to quit the Court. After Rizzio's death, he went with Athol, as we have seen, to the Perthshire Highlands; but though Athol must have returned to Holyrood directly on the collapse of the conspiracy, Maitland did

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<sup>1</sup> Melville's *Memoirs*, p. 72.

not accompany him. The allusions to the Secretary's movements during the next three or four months (which occur in the letters of the English agents at Berwick) are, as might be expected, somewhat vague and puzzling. In one letter the writer declares that "Lethington despairs of pardon and must fly into England." Then we learn that "he has liberty to live in Flanders;" then that he is going to Caithness, where he has been ordered to reside.<sup>1</sup> Soon afterwards he is heard of in Lauderdale, and on the 28th of July he writes to Cecil from Balloch, above Dunkeld. Whatever the origin of the estrangement, however, it is tolerably clear that before many weeks had passed, Mary had come to regard the absence of her most able adviser with keen regret.<sup>2</sup> She was not a good hater; and it would appear that she was only prevented from recalling him by the importunity of Darnley and the greed of Bothwell. Darnley swore that Maitland was one of the traitors; and Bothwell had always held that the lands of the Abbey of Haddington should have been reserved for a Hepburn. Bothwell and Maitland had never been friends; no love had been lost between them in the past;

<sup>1</sup> Bedford and Randolph's letters, 4th April, 25th April. | at this time,—he is to have a piece of the same silver or gold

<sup>2</sup> Lethington's name occurs | edged stuff which she had left in Mary's Inventories drawn up | to Bothwell.



and Bothwell may have felt that he was now in a position to wipe off an old score. But though Darnley and Bothwell were violently hostile, the Secretary had powerful allies at Holyrood. "There was a controversy," Randolph wrote to Cecil on the 2d April, "between the Earls Bothwell and Athol for the Lord of Liddington, the one being his great friend, the other in all cases against him. That matter is quieted, and the Earl Athol a continual traveller for the Lord of Liddington." "The Lord of Liddington's friends," he added on 2d May, "make all the means they can to stay his departure out of the country, whereunto the Queen is not unwilling." Mary went to the Castle to be confined in June, and until her recovery the controversy was allowed to rest. But early in August, after a violent scene in her presence between Moray and Bothwell, she determined to recall her Secretary without further delay. "For news here, the Earls of Moray and Bothwell have been at evil words for my Lord of Ledingtoun in the Queen's presence, and since have not met together; but her Grace is earnest to agree them, and purposes to be at Stirling the 24th of this month, and to cause Ledingtoun meet her there, to end the matter."<sup>1</sup> The meeting took place soon after-

<sup>1</sup> Robert Melville to Cecil, 14th August 1566. In another "Advertisement out of Scotland" it is stated that Bothwell

wards,—not at Stirling, but at a house in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh,—“ a friend’s house of mine nigh this town.” (The friend was probably the Laird of Craigmillar, who had married the sister of Janet Menteith—Maitland’s first wife.)<sup>1</sup> “ I think your letter,” Maitland wrote to Cecil in September, “ brought with it unto me *bonum omen*, or rather a good luck. For the same day it came to my hands, it pleased the Queen’s Majesty to come to a friend’s house of mine, nigh this town, secretly, accompanied only by the Earls of Argyll, Moray, and Bothwell, to mak aggreaunce betwixt the said Earl Bothwell and me, where after some conference with us both, in the hearing of the others, by one consent all differences betwixt us were accorded, and we made friends. Whereupon her Majesty was well pleased that I should resort in her company to this town, and received me to her good favour and my former place.”<sup>2</sup>

The Darnley entanglement was less easily dealt with. The foolish and headstrong lad had

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having declared that “ ere he parted with such lands he should part with his life,” Moray replied that “ twenty as honest men as he should lose their lives ere he reft Lethington.”

<sup>1</sup> “ I will be bold to recom-

mend unto you this Bearer, the Lord of Craigmillar, who is my dear friend. He has to his bed-fellow my wife’s sister.”—Maitland to Lady Cecil, 19th July 1560. (Hatfield MSS.)

<sup>2</sup> Maitland to Cecil (from Edinburgh) 20th September 1566.



been sinking deeper and deeper into the mire. He had in a fit of incredible folly outraged the Queen. He had with characteristic meanness and feebleness abandoned his associates in the conspiracy. With singular infelicity he had contrived to make himself obnoxious to every faction in Scotland. He was distrusted by the loyalists; he was hated by the Calvinists. He could as little look for friendship from Huntly and Bothwell as from Morton and Argyll. His own life was loose and disorderly; yet he was insanely jealous of every one who approached the Queen. "He cannot bear that the Queen should use familiarity with man or woman, and especially the ladies of Argyll, Moray, and Mar, who keep most company with her."<sup>1</sup> He was utterly unqualified for the duties of government; he had neither industry nor natural aptitude; yet he bitterly resented his exclusion from the Council Chamber. The sense of the feudal relation was still strong; Buchanan's judgment of Darnley, as Knox's of Bothwell, proves that neither was uninfluenced by the sentiment of the time; yet even Buchanan—a native of the Lennox—has little to urge on behalf of Henry Stuart. Had he known it, his only safety was to have effaced himself so completely that he

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<sup>1</sup> Advertisement out of Scotland. August 1566.

should have ceased to be a political embarrassment. As Elizabeth would not recognise him, he set himself to embitter the relations of the Queens; and as Mary declined to gratify his childish vindictiveness, he attempted by way of reprisal to make mischief between her and her Catholic kinsfolk. It must not be forgotten that the political relations of the country were at the time so delicate that even a fool like Darnley might have brought about a catastrophe. Though his intellect was dull his antipathies were violent, and he appears to have regarded Maitland, for one reason or another, with special animosity. We have seen that he was anxious to prevent him from returning to Court; and (especially if we attach credit to the assertion of a contemporary writer whose narrative has been recently published) there is reason to believe that he had pressed Mary to dismiss him from office. "So the King proposed that the office of Secretary should be given to the Bishop of Ross in the place of Lethington, whom he especially charged with having been a principal in the late conspiracy; and in the Queen's absence he signed a resolution to that effect which had been passed by the Council. The Queen, however, would not consent to this measure, for she was persuaded that the King had brought this charge against Lethington, in order to put

into his office a man at his own devotion. She refused, therefore, to dismiss Lethington, although advised to do so by the King and the Lords; for he was a man of understanding, experienced in the ways of the country, and of whom—if the truth be told—she stood much in need. And further, as there was no proof of the charge against Lethington, she caused him to be recalled shortly afterwards, trusting more than he deserved to his good qualities and his loyalty to herself.”<sup>1</sup>

The Earl of Bothwell had returned to Scotland when Moray deserted his sister; and the stormy and masterful temper of the Border chief was another element of mischief, another danger to Mary and the State. James Hepburn was not a man of any true political capacity; yet the force of his character had been generally recognised; and both Moray and Maitland had felt that so constant an enemy of the English alliance should if possible be kept at a prudent distance from the Court. “He is as mortal an enemy to our nation,” Randolph had reported, “as any man alive;” and if such a man was allowed to worm himself into Mary’s confidence

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<sup>1</sup> History of Mary Stuart, by Claude Nau, her Secretary (1883), p. 20. Nau’s manuscript has been admirably edited by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson, S.J., who considers it authentic, and as possibly dictated by Mary herself.

he might work a world of mischief. There had been, however, no noticeable intimacy between the Border Earl and the Queen. His contemporaries allege that he was ill-favoured, if not positively ugly; and, at any rate, he was old enough to be her father. It was his political influence that was dreaded; and up to the day of the Darnley murder there is, so far as I know, no hint or suggestion in any contemporary writing that he was the Queen's favoured lover. Years before he had been rude and unmannerly: and Mary had resented his language; but now when the nobles in whom she had confided had proved faithless, when Moray, and Ruthven, and Morton, and Grange, and Maitland had successively deserted her, she was thrown back upon the party in which the sentiment of personal loyalty was strong; and in this party Bothwell was a power. It was an immense misfortune for Mary that in the unsettled state of the country an unprincipled ruffian like James Hepburn should have been able to force himself to the front; but his advancement can hardly be imputed to her as an offence, or even as a fault.<sup>1</sup>

The stars were fighting against her: misad-

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<sup>1</sup> It may be added that most of the offices which Bothwell held had either come to him by a sort of hereditary title, or had been obtained at an earlier period.



venture succeeded misadventure ; and—to crown all—at this difficult juncture, at this crisis of her fate, Mary's health gave way. The birth of her child was followed by a period of prolonged prostration. Her constitution was somewhat peculiar,—there was in her case an unusually close connection between mind and body. Any strong or sudden emotion was certain to produce a violent physical reaction. She was naturally robust and her spirit was invincible ; but there was somewhere a flaw in the organism,—vexation or displeasure being not unfrequently followed by fainting fits that would last for hours. All these constitutional symptoms were aggravated after her confinement. Melville says that though of a quick spirit, she was “ something sad when solitary ” ; and, surrounded for the most part of her life by turbulent and treacherous nobles, the sense of isolation must have been often excessive. Hitherto she had borne herself with eminent cheerfulness and splendid intrepidity ; but during 1566 she seems for the first time to have lost heart. A vivid realisation of the cruel and unscrupulous forces by which she was surrounded, and with which she had to contend, had been forced upon her by the “ tragedies ” she had witnessed. “ I could wish to have died,” she said to Le Croc after the illness at Jedburgh. There can be no doubt that

Darnley's crass ingratitude and ineptitude had wounded her deeply; but we may fairly assume that had she been in her usual health she would not have allowed his misconduct to hurt her, as it did. She was morbid and spiritless,—the mental reflecting the physical depression. Those about her recognised the change. "The Queen breaketh much," Drury wrote, "and is subject to frequent fainting fits." She had been all her life at home in the saddle; and when in October she rode from Jedburgh to the Hermitage, she failed to remember that she was still unfit for a ride which a year before would have been well within her powers. Nau says expressly that she had not then recovered from the effects of her confinement. "On the day following her ride she was seized by a pain in the side which kept her in bed. It proved to be a severe attack of the spleen, which had troubled her during the previous week, and to which pain in the side she had been more or less subject ever since her confinement."<sup>1</sup> On this occasion she was at the point of death. "So severely was she handled, that every one thought she would die. The pain in her side was very sharp, and was accompanied by frequent vomiting of blood."<sup>2</sup> The Jesuit father—

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<sup>1</sup> Nau's Memorials, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Edmund Hay's Narrative.  
Nau, p. cxliii.

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one of the noble family of Erroll—from whose narrative these words are taken, attributes her illness to anxiety about the reception of the Papal Nuncio; but it is more probable, as Lethington suggests, that she was worried into the fever which so nearly proved fatal by the mental distress occasioned by Darnley's misconduct,—the fatigue of the ride no doubt rendering the attack more acute. “The occasion of the Queen's sickness”—Maitland wrote—“so far as I can understand, is due to thought and displeasure; and I trow by what I could wring further of her own declaration to me, the root of it is the King. For she has done him so great honour without the advice of her friends, and contrary to the advice of her subjects, and he on the other hand has recompensed her with such ingratitude, and misuses himself so far toward her, that it is a heartbreak to her to think that he should be her husband; and how to be free of him she has no outgait.”<sup>1</sup> This was in October; in December Le Croc wrote to Beaton;—“The Queen is at present at Craigmillar, about a league distant from this city. She is in the hands of the physicians, and I do assure you is not at all well; and I do believe the principal part of her disease to consist of a deep grief and sorrow. Nor does

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<sup>1</sup> Lethington to Beaton, 24th October 1566. Tytler, v. 364.

it seem possible to make her forget the same. Still she repeats these words,—*I could wish to be dead!*"<sup>1</sup> The young prince was baptised in December, and when the French ambassador arrived at Stirling he found Mary "weeping sore," and complaining of "a grievous pain in her side."

It was when the Queen was thus morbidly nervous and sensitive—unhinged in body and mind—that the conference at Craigmillar took place. What was to be done with the King? had become a political question of extreme urgency. His misconduct at first might have been folly only; but the folly had latterly become so pronounced that insanity was the more probable explanation. Randolph had foreseen, when Darnley set foot in Scotland, that among a proud and jealous nobility the foolish lad was like to fare badly. Since then he had proved himself—as his associates had discovered to their cost—a traitor as well as a fool, and honour among thieves is an indispensable virtue. Altogether the outlook was black. He was King in name, but by his own misconduct he had become utterly contemptible. He had not a friend left in the world. The isolation of his position—so tragical as almost to provoke our pity—is at-

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<sup>1</sup> Keith, i. xcvi.



tested by the fact that Huntly and Bothwell, as well as Maitland, Moray, and Argyll—the leaders of all the political parties in Scotland—were among those who met at Craigmillar.

The favourite castle of Mary Stuart occupies a commanding position on the road to Dalkeith. Facing Arthur's Seat, flanked by the Pentlands, it crowns the low ridge that lies between the two. Though close to the capital—so close that the chimes of St Giles's bells are clearly heard of a summer night—the castle is in the open country, and the breeze that blows round its turrets is fresh and keen. From the battlements the outlook is wide,—the great Lothian plain, with glimpses of shining sea and shadowy moorland, stretching away to the horizon. It was here that the political movement against Darnley first took shape. The substantial accuracy of the narrative of the events that occurred at Craigmillar during the last days of November or the first days of December 1566—prepared by Huntly and Argyll—has not been seriously impeached.

Argyll was in bed, when early in the morning of a December day Moray and Lethington entered his room. They came to ascertain whether he would assist them in procuring the pardon of Morton from the Queen. Morton had been banished because he had aided Moray and his friends

to return to Scotland, and they felt that they would be ungrateful if they left him to suffer for the good offices he had rendered them. Argyll having intimated that he was willing to assist, on the understanding that Mary would not be offended, Maitland suggested that the best means to secure her acquiescence was to find some means by which she could be divorced from Darnley, who had behaved so badly to her in so many ways. Argyll did not see how this could be effected, but Lethington assured him that a separation could be arranged. Huntly was sent for, and, his consent having been secured, they went together to the room occupied by Bothwell, with whom the matter was again discussed. Then the five—Moray, Maitland, Argyll, Huntly, and Bothwell—had an audience of the Queen. Lethington spoke for the rest. They could not disguise from her or from themselves, he said, that the King's conduct had become intolerable. His evil example was hurtful to the whole realm; and he might at any moment do her and them an evil turn for which it would be difficult to find a remedy. Would she agree to a divorce? Mary listened in silence; at last she replied that if a lawful divorce, which would not prejudice her son's rights, could be obtained, she might possibly be induced to comply with their advice. But it

was possible, she added, that Darnley would reform; he might have another chance; and she herself in the meantime could visit her friends in France. Then Lethington, speaking for the others, said, "Madame, we that are here, the principal of your Grace's nobility and Council, will find the means that your Majesty shall be quit of him without prejudice of your son; and although my Lord of Moray be little less scrupulous for a Protestant than your Grace is for a Papist, I am assured that he will look through his fingers thereto, and will behold our doings, saying nothing against the same." The Queen answered, "I will that ye do nathing whereby any spot may be laid to my honour or conscience, and therefore I pray you rather let the matter be in the state it is, abiding till God in His goodness provide a remedy. Thinking to do me service," she added, "the end may not be conformable to your desires,—on the contrary, it may turn to my hurt and displeasure." "Madame," said Lethington, "let us guide the matter among us, and your Grace shall see nothing but what is good and lawful and approved by Parliament."<sup>1</sup>

Moray did not venture to allege that he was not present at the Craigmillar Conference. On

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<sup>1</sup> Keith, iii. 290.

the contrary he expressly admitted that he was there. He had given Elizabeth, he afterwards explained, his own version of what took place at the interview, and (he continued), whoever affirmed that he was privy to any unlawful or dishonourable purpose, or that he attached his signature to any Band subscribed at Craigmillar, spoke wickedly and untruly.<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that Moray's reply is in no respect inconsistent with the "Protestation,"—it does not traverse any one of the specific averments made by Argyll and Huntly. It need only be added that if the Conference at Craigmillar is evidence against Mary (to the effect that she consented to the murder of Darnley), it is precisely to the same effect evidence against Moray. The objects of the Conference were either lawful and honourable, or unlawful and dishonourable. If they were lawful and honourable, neither Mary nor Moray is compromised by what took place; if they were unlawful and dishonourable, they incriminate the one exactly in the same sense that they incriminate the other.

The Craigmillar Conference took place during the first week of December 1566; in the early morning of 10th February 1567, the Kirk o' Field, where Darnley slept, was blown into the air. It

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<sup>1</sup> Keith, iii. 294.

is hardly to be denied that the two events—separated by barely two months—stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect. But with the Craigmillar Conference the direct evidence against the Queen closes; the proof that connects her with the murder is henceforth circumstantial (or inferential) only; and it may be said with some confidence that the clumsy catastrophe that ensued was directed neither by the keen brain of Maitland, nor by the deft hand of Mary. The doom which the Peers had virtually pronounced was carried out; but Bothwell's vulgar violence and headstrong passion converted what might have been regarded as a quasi-judicial execution into a midnight outrage.

It is unnecessary to linger over the incidents of a tragedy that has become one of the commonplaces of history. A few of the salient facts, however, brought together into orderly sequence, may prove serviceable to the reader.

Darnley, on quitting Stirling, after the baptism of the infant prince, was seized with what appears to have been small-pox.<sup>1</sup> Some writers have assumed that poison had been administered to him by Mary; others have asserted, with greater probability, that his constitution had

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<sup>1</sup> Bedford had no doubt that it was small-pox. Bedford to Cecil, 9th January 1567.



been impaired by his excesses, and that the poison was in his blood. He lay at Glasgow in a nerveless, shattered condition for some time. Moved, it may be, by his entreaties (for it seems probable that he had asked her to come to him), the Queen went to Glasgow, and in the course of a few days they returned to Edinburgh together. The young prince was at Holyrood, and as the disease from which Darnley was suffering was understood to be infectious, he was taken (though Mary herself was anxious that he should go to Craigmillar) to the Kirk o' Field, a house which had belonged to one of the monastic orders, and which, Knox asserts, had been lately bought by "Master James Balfour." Melville says that it was a place of good air,—more bracing for an invalid than Holyrood. Some rooms were prepared for the King, and a bedroom was fitted up for the Queen, which she occasionally occupied during the ten days that intervened. On the evening of Sunday, the 9th of February, a large quantity of powder was conveyed into the house by Bothwell's retainers. It has been said that it was deposited in the Queen's sleeping-room; but as the house was torn up from the foundations—"dung in dross to the very ground stone"—it appears more probable that the greater part of it, at least, had been placed in one of the cellars. "The

train of gunpowder inflammit the hail timber of the house, and trublit the walls thereof, in sic sort that great stanes of the length of ten foot, and of the breadth of four foot, were found blawin frae that house a far way."<sup>1</sup> As eminently characteristic of the parsimonious spirit of this penurious Queen—"economical even in the prodigality of her vices"—it has been asserted by Buchanan that on the previous evening the good bed on which she had slept was by her direction taken away, and an inferior one put in its place.<sup>2</sup> After supper she went to visit the King, and returned about eleven o'clock to the palace, where a masked ball was being held. After Darnley's death it became the cue of those who had been hitherto his most bitter enemies to speak well of him. He had repented, they said, of his early irregularities, and had sought refuge in the consolations of religion. There is a letter by Drury, written about the end of April, in which it is stated that on the night of his murder Darnley, before he went to sleep, repeated some verses of the fifty-fifth psalm. The sense of approaching doom may have been hanging over the victim; his illness may have steadied and sobered him; but the excessive felicity, the suspicious appropriateness, of the

<sup>1</sup> *Historie of King James the Sext*, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan, Book xviii.

selection is apt to provoke incredulity. About two or three o'clock next morning the Kirk o' Field was blown into the darkness. "Upon the tenth day of Februar, at twa hours before none in the morning, there come certain traitors to the said Provost's house, wherein was our sovereign's husband Henrie, and ane servant of his, callit William Taylour, lying in their nakit beds; and there privily with wrang keys openit the doors, and come in upon the said prince, and there without mercy wyrriet<sup>1</sup> him and his said servant in their beds; and thereafter took him and his servant furth of the house and cast him nakit in ane yard beyond the thief raw, and syne come to the house again and blew the house in the air, so that there remainit not ane stane upon aneuther undestroyit."<sup>2</sup> This narrative is taken from the 'Diurnal of Occurrents'; Robert Birrel has another version;—"The house was raised up from the ground with pouder; the King's chamberman, named John Taylor, was found with him lying in ane yard dead under ane tree; and the King, if he had not been cruelly werriet with his ain garters, after he fell out of the air, he had lived."<sup>3</sup> The wretches who

<sup>1</sup> Strangled.

<sup>2</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents, 105.

<sup>3</sup> Birrel's Diarey, 7.



were engaged in the business appear to have lost their heads, and the precise manner in which Darnley met his death is not certainly known. The streets were deserted; the citizens were in bed; even in the palace the masque was over, and the lights were out. Only in the lodging of the Archbishop of St Andrews a lamp had been burning all night—so those in the higher parts of the town declared—until, on the explosion, it was suddenly extinguished. The Archbishop lived close to the Kirk o' Field, and Buchanan suggests that he was watching—well knowing what was on hand.

At what particular moment Bothwell was induced to raise his eyes to the Queen it is not now easy to ascertain. Buchanan alleges that they had long been on terms of criminal familiarity; and that Mary's partiality for the lusty Borderer was notorious. The evidence, however, is all the other way,—until after Darnley's death there is not a scrap of writing showing that such an impression prevailed. The legend was of later growth, and with much else may be traced to the industrious animosity of the man who had been her pensioner, and who at the close of the year which according to his view had been spent in the shameless gratification of unlawful passion—"They seemed to fear nothing more than that their wickedness should be un-

known"—had celebrated her virtues in choice Latin. The air, however, was thick with rumours of treachery, and once, or more than once, Mary had been warned that the Earl intended to carry her off. She treated the warnings with characteristic impatience, refusing to believe that a faithful servant of the Crown could so readily forget his duty to his mistress. There can be little doubt that even before the meeting of the Parliament in April, the great Border chief had been in communication with several of the leading nobility on the subject of the Queen's marriage. A few of the honestest of their number appear to have been startled by the man's presumption; but the rest either openly approved or silently acquiesced. Such a plot was of course very welcome to the faction which traded on the dishonour of the Queen. The least clear-headed among them could not fail to perceive that were Mary forced into a union with Bothwell, her authority would be at an end.

Bothwell was tried for the murder on the 12th of April, and on the evening of the 19th the memorable supper at Ainslie's tavern took place. The supper appears to have been attended by all the influential members of the Parliament, which on that day closed its sittings. After supper, Bothwell laid before the assembled Peers a paper which he asked them to sign. The

Peers, with the exception of Lord Eglinton, who "slipped away," complied with the request; and men like Argyll, Huntly, Cassilis, Morton, Boyd, Seton, Semple, and Herries attached their names to a "band," by which they engaged to the utmost of their power to promote a marriage between Bothwell and the Queen. It is difficult to fathom the motives which could have induced so many powerful nobles to approve a marriage which in their hearts they detested; but Mr Froude is certainly not far wrong when he suggests that several at least appended their signatures in deliberate treachery to tempt the Queen to ruin.

Two days afterwards Mary went to Stirling. On her return she was seized by Bothwell, and carried off—with or without her consent—to Dunbar. When they reached the castle, the true object of the "ravishment" was disclosed. Her tears and reproaches—this is her own story, which may be held to be attested by Maitland—were thrown away upon her captor,—who, after she had treated his audacious proposition with indignation, produced the "band" which the nobility had signed. She was kept for a week a close prisoner. During all that time no hand was raised to set her free. At length, after actual violence had been used, she consented to become his wife.



It was on the 15th of May that the marriage was celebrated. "And that same day this pamphlet was attached upon the palace port,—*Mense malas Maio nubere vulgus ait.*" The nobles who had lured Hepburn on were already mustering their vassals, and on the 7th June the Queen and her husband were forced to quit the palace and make for Borthwick. But they were surrounded before they had had time to rest, and it was with the utmost difficulty that, eluding the pursuers, they managed to reach Dunbar. On the 15th June the forces of the Queen and of the Confederate Lords faced each other all day at Carberry Hill. There was no fighting, however; an agreement having been concluded by which Bothwell was discreetly permitted to take himself away to Dunbar—(thence to Orkney, Shetland, and the Norwegian seas),—Mary returning to Edinburgh with the men who, as they professed, had risen to release her from her ravisher, but who treated her—now that she was in their hands—with studied rudeness and insults which had been carefully rehearsed. They made it plain to her from the first that their anxiety for her welfare had been feigned; and two days later they sent her to the prison on the inch of Lochleven which had been prepared for her reception by Moray when the Darnley marriage was in prospect.

Divested of all extraneous matter these are the uncontradicted facts ; how are these facts to be construed, in what sense are they to be read ? Ever since the tragic story took place, there have been two factions who have found no difficulties in the way of a definitive judgment. On the one hand, it has been maintained (and is still maintained by the ecclesiastics who are about to canonise her at Rome) that Mary was innocent as a child, immaculate as a saint ; on the other, that she had sinned as perhaps no other woman had sinned, and that the mistress of Bothwell was the murderer of Darnley.

It rather appears to me that no decisive conclusion is now possible, and that anything like dogmatism is to be avoided. My own impression is that either explanation is too simple and complete to be accepted as an entirely adequate solution of an extremely obscure and intricate problem. I would be inclined to say that there is a grain of truth in each : the whole truth in neither. While it must be freely acknowledged that Mary was rash and indiscreet to the verge of criminality, it may yet admit of reasonable doubt whether the graver charges preferred against her by the ruling party in Scotland have been, or are capable of being, substantiated.

The interpretation which consistently reconciles all, or most of, the facts known to us, is

that which rational criticism will prefer to accept. Such reconciliation will help to recommend to those who have no antipathies or predilections to gratify that interpretation of Mary's actions at this time which I have elsewhere ventured to propose.<sup>1</sup> Those who agree with me will hold that Mary was not entirely unaware of the measures which were being taken by the nobility to secure in one way or other the removal of Darnley; that if she did not expressly sanction the enterprise, she failed, firmly and promptly, to forbid its execution; that though she hesitated to the last between pity and aversion, yet that what amounted to, or what may at least be characterised as, passive acquiescence, was sufficient to compromise her; that the equivocal position in which she found herself placed, either by accident or by design, sufficiently explains whatever in her subsequent conduct is wanting in firmness and dignity; that as the plot proceeded, Bothwell came to the front, and that to his daring and reckless hand the execution of the informal sentence of the peers was ultimately intrusted; that he induced the nobles who had been his accomplices to promote his suit to the Queen, and that for various reasons, good, bad, and indifferent, "the best part of the realm did ap-

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<sup>1</sup> The Impeachment of Mary Stuart. 1870.

prove it, either by flattery or by their silence” ; that in accepting Bothwell, Mary could not be accounted a free agent,—her health was impaired, her spirit was broken, she had been imprudent, and her indiscretions could be used against her with fatal effect, while (Lethington excepted) she had no friend beside her on whose disinterested counsel she could rely ; that she struggled against the indirect compulsion of circumstances, and the direct pressure that was brought to bear upon her, as best she could, declining to consent to a ruinous union until actual force had been used ; and that thereafter, there being no other “outgait,” she submitted with a heavy heart and grievous misgivings to the inevitable.

That this was the view taken by the nobles themselves, when they rose to deliver her from Bothwell, and that the plea of guilty love and guilty knowledge was an *after-thought* which was not put forward until the fanatical party, which had been persistently and obstinately disloyal, had got the upper hand, and had determined, in the name of the infant prince, to seize the government and dethrone the Queen, cannot well be denied. Indeed the strongest argument in favour of the view that Mary’s conduct in relation to Bothwell is susceptible of an innocent construction is furnished by the admission of the Lords themselves. Their earliest conten-

tion was that Mary had been coerced into the marriage by Bothwell, and that they had risen to free her from her ravisher. This position was abandoned, and then they maintained that facts *notorious to all the world* were sufficient to convict her of having conspired with her paramour. Later on, however, it became clear to them that the indictment would break down if it was not otherwise established. It was then, and not till then—not indeed till Elizabeth had assured them that the proof of guilty complicity was ridiculously inadequate—that certain letters which they said were written by Mary were reluctantly produced. If these letters were genuine—love-letters addressed by Mary Stuart to James Hepburn—there can be no reasonable doubt of her guilt. They prove that she was “bewitched” by Bothwell, and that under the spell of an unaccountable infatuation she encouraged her lover to murder her husband. But if they were *not* genuine—what then? Their genuineness will be discussed hereafter; at present all that I need say is, that if it can be shown that they were manufactured, and manufactured by the Lords themselves, the fraud is absolutely fatal. It is not merely that the letters cease to be evidence against Mary; they become evidence of the most damning kind against those who used them. Mary may



have been in love with Bothwell or she may not. Upon the facts presented by the historian the judgment remains in suspense. We cannot positively affirm that she was or that she was not. But if those who accuse her proceed to produce as proof of their case love-letters which it is plain that Mary did not write, then the inevitable conclusion is that Mary was *not* in love with Bothwell. Had she been in love with Bothwell, or (which is the same thing for my present purpose) had there been any proof that she was in love with Bothwell, the services of the forger would not have been required. The person who pleads but fails to prove an *alibi* is pretty certain to be convicted. Had he remained passive, had he stood simply on the defensive, he might have escaped. But when he avers that he was at a place where it is proved that he was not, the jury will not unreasonably conclude that he was at the place where he avers that he was not. Whenever the Casket Letters are discredited, we are logically compelled not only to reject the Casket Letters themselves, but to place that construction upon the admitted facts which is consistent with the innocence of the Queen.

Nor can it be disputed that many of the allegations against Mary which were at one time urged, with what appeared overwhelming force,

have been deprived by more recent investigation and keener criticism of not a little of their weight. That the criminal relations between Mary and Bothwell were notorious for months before the murder (the fact being that there is no suggestion in any contemporary document of improper or unusual intimacy, and that, on the contrary, the prudence and wisdom of her conduct up to the day of the murder are warmly commended by those who were nearest to her at the time); that immediately on her recovery from her confinement she went to Alloa with a crew of "pirates," of whom Bothwell was the captain (the fact being that she was accompanied by her brother and the chief nobles of her Court); that whenever she heard of Bothwell's wound she flew to Hermitage Castle like a distracted mistress (the fact being that she did not visit Hermitage, again in the company of her brother, until she had held the assizes at Jedburgh, and until Bothwell was out of danger—ten or twelve days after she had first heard of the accident); that whenever Darnley was murdered, casting aside all decent restraint, she went to Seton to amuse herself at the butts with her lover (the fact being that she went to Seton by the advice of her physician for change of air,—leaving Bothwell and Huntly in Edinburgh to keep the Prince till her return); that she was eager for

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the marriage and hurried it on with unseemly haste (the fact being that on the very day of the ceremony she was found weeping bitterly and praying only for death):—these and similar calumnies have been conclusively and finally silenced. The future historian of this period must eliminate from his narrative the gross and grotesque adventures, which appear to have been invented, or at least *adapted*, by Buchanan, whose virulent animosities were utterly unscrupulous, and whose clumsy invective was as bitter as it was pedantic. The extravagant perversion of fact, which makes the philippic against Mary a monument of bad faith, is mildly censured by Mr Burton, who is constrained to admit that “in the *Detection* a number of incredible charges are heaped up.” “The great scholar and poet,” we are told, “may have known politics on a large scale, but he was not versed in the intricacies of the human heart.” The apology is somewhat lame. Buchanan must have been aware that he was calumniating the Queen; and the explanation that the tirade followed “the grand forms of ancient classical denunciation,” is hardly an excuse for wilful lying.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the reasoning, many of the arguments, moreover, to which we have been used, cease to

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<sup>1</sup> *History of Scotland*, iv. 447-449.

affect the mind, whenever it is freely admitted that Mary could not have been ignorant that the peers of Scotland were leagued against her husband. If Mary was not the accomplice of Bothwell—it has been asked, for instance—why did she fail to prosecute and punish the murderers? It may be admitted that no resolute effort was made to secure their punishment; but the reason is obvious. The Privy Council was the Scottish executive; and every Lord of the Council was more or less compromised. Even had Mary been anxious to bring the assassins to justice, it would have been madness, as matters stood, to make the attempt. The trial of Bothwell was forced upon a reluctant Council by the importunities of Lennox, and the acquittal was a matter of form. Still, in all this, there is no evidence of that criminal complicity with a *lover* which is the sting of the accusation against the Queen.

I return to Maitland.

During the six months that followed the Craigmillar conference, Lethington's position may be defined without difficulty. He had come to the conclusion that Darnley must be removed,—the “young fool and presumptuous tyrant” had made himself impossible, had united all parties against him, had alienated the Queen and disgusted the nobles. But we may feel perfectly certain that Maitland at least was

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far from eager to put Bothwell in Darnley's place. Had he had any suspicions indeed that Bothwell aspired to the Crown, had he had any suspicions that Bothwell was favoured by Mary, he would probably have concluded that Darnley, as the lesser evil, might be allowed to remain. Peace had been patched up between the Secretary and Bothwell; but the truce was hollow. The hostility of the fanatical reformers had not abated; Mary had hitherto parried with success the weapons that had been directed against her by Knox and Cecil, by Morton and Moray; but if she could be *compromised*, if, for instance, she could be forced into an unworthy and dishonouring marriage, the object for which they had so pertinaciously plotted might be attained. Knox, could he have had his way, would have put Mary to death without scruple; the laymen were less sanguinary; but—now that a prince was born—they might at least compel her to abdicate. James VI., like James IV., could be used as a “buckler” by the disaffected nobles and the fanatical “professors.” They could play the son against the mother, as they had already played the husband against the wife. The young prince, indeed, was in one view a surer card than Darnley. There was no risk that an infant in arms would turn against them as Darnley had turned. Maitland, as we shall see, lent

himself to neither faction. He detested Bothwell; he distrusted Knox; whereas he was devoted to Mary; and to Mary he steadily adhered.

Whenever Maitland's peace, in the autumn of 1566, was made with Mary, the relations of the Queens again became cordial, or at least assumed a show of cordiality. On 4th October he wrote to Cecil, urging him to use all such good offices as he was wont to use for the joining of the realms in perfect amity; and this letter was followed next day by one from Mary herself, in which she assured Cecil that until the affair of Rokeby the spy she had always had a good opinion of him as a faithful Minister; and that, as he had now recovered his old place in her goodwill, she would be glad to see him at the baptism of the prince, her son.<sup>1</sup> Maitland went with her to Jedburgh in October, from whence he wrote more than once to Cecil and Beaton, describing the symptoms of her dangerous illness.<sup>2</sup> A curious letter, dated from Home Castle in the Merse, has been preserved, in which he tells the English Secretary that his own experience of backbiters makes him marvel less at the

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 4th October. Mary to Cecil, 5th October. Maitland to Beaton, 24th October. It appears from the letter of 26th October that

<sup>2</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 24th-26th October. Mary had had a relapse.

misconstruction of Cecil's doings.<sup>1</sup> From Home the Court moved to Whittinghame, and from there to Craigmillar,—where, as we have seen, the famous conference of the nobles took place. Mary, attended by Maitland, left Craigmillar for Holyrood on 5th December,—remaining in the capital till the 10th; and then, “though not quite recovered,”<sup>2</sup> proceeded to Stirling for the baptism of the prince. Camden alleged that Darnley was not present at the baptism, as the English ambassador had received instructions from Elizabeth not to recognise him in any way—an assertion which Robertson and later writers have attempted to controvert. It is to be observed, however, that in Nau's recently published narrative the same reason for Darnley's absence is assigned: “The King was not present at the baptism, for he refused to associate with the English unless they would acknowledge his title of King, and to do this they had been forbidden by the Queen of England, their mistress.”<sup>3</sup>

The baptism was hardly over before Maitland's influence was exerted to obtain Morton's pardon

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 11th November.

<sup>2</sup> Bedford to Cecil, 5th December.

<sup>3</sup> Nau, p. 33. Nau's narrative agrees with the statement in another contemporary MS. in

the Cotton Library, that “Darnley was constrained to keep his chamber for fear of offending the Queen of England, whose malice still continued toward him.” Ibid., p. cxlvii.



(which Mary granted with her usual generous facility); and early in 1567 this powerful and dangerous noble was again in Scotland. It was at this time also that Maitland's persistent wooing was crowned with success; in January—in the Chapel-Royal at Stirling—he was married to Mary Fleming. The Queen had threatened to interrupt his honeymoon by sending him on a mission to England; but he excused himself on the plea that it was unreasonable to divorce him from the young wife to whom he had been so recently united.<sup>1</sup> Some time during January, either before or after his marriage, he went with Bothwell to Whittinghame, where Morton was residing with his near relative, Archibald Douglas. Hitherto Bothwell and Morton had been the leaders of hostile factions, and it was probably thought desirable that Bothwell should be accompanied by one of Morton's friends. But Maitland does not appear to have been present during the interview at which, as Morton afterwards admitted in his confession, the murder of Darnley was discussed. Archibald Douglas was "in the yarde"; but no one else. "In the yarde of Whittinghame, after long communing,

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 8th February 1567. Mary wrote of the same date a letter which one is inclined to fancy she could hardly have written had she known that Darnley was to be murdered within the next thirty or forty hours.



the Earl of Bothwell proposed to me the purpose of the King's murther, requiring what would be my part thereunto, seeing it was the Queen's mind that the King should be tane away; because, as he said, she blamed the King mair of Davie's slaughter than me. My answer to the Earl Bothwell at that time was this; that I would not in ony ways meddle with that matter, and that for this cause,—'Because I am but newlie come out of a new trouble, whereof as yet I am not redd; being forbidden to come near the Court by seven miles; and therefore I cannot enter myself in sic a new trouble again.' After this answer, Mr Archibald Douglas entered in conference with me, persuading me to agree with the Earl Bothwell. Last of all, the Earl Bothwell yet being in Whittinghame, earnestly proposed the same matter to me again, persuading me thereunto, because the Queen would have it to be done. Unto this my answer was: I desired the Earl Bothwell to bring the Queen's handwrite to me for a warrant, and then I should give him an answer; otherwise I wud not meddle therewith. The quhilk warrant he never reported unto me."<sup>1</sup> Maitland's name, it will be observed, is not introduced; and I am not acquainted with

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<sup>1</sup> Morton added that, being afterwards in St Andrews about the time of the murder the proposal was renewed, and that his answer was, that "I had not gotten the Queen's answer

any other evidence that directly connects him with the murder. He knew, no doubt, as Mary knew, that Darnley's removal had been resolved on by the peers; but it would rather appear that he had not been apprised of the singular plan of campaign devised by Bothwell. The three rode back to Edinburgh—Lethington, Bothwell, and Archibald Douglas; and soon after reaching Holyrood—if Douglas can be believed—he was directed by Lethington to return to Whittinghame, and inform Morton that the Queen would receive no speech of the matter appointed unto him,—“which answer, as God shall be my judge, was no other than these words: ‘Schaw to the Earl Morton that the Queen will hear no speech of that matter appointed unto him.’” “And when I cravit”—he continues—“that the answer might be made more sensible [explicit], Secretary Ledington said that the Earl would sufficiently understand it.”<sup>1</sup>

in writing, which was promised unto me; and therefore, seeing the Earl Bothwell never reported any warrant of the Queen, I meddled never further with it.” Any one of the Casket Letters would have been sufficient warrant; and as he was obviously very anxious to secure Morton's assistance, one is inclined to wonder why, if they were then in his posses-

sion, Bothwell did not use them. Nor is it easy to understand why the woman who wrote the Casket Letters should have hesitated to comply with the request of a lover to whom it is plain (if the letters are genuine), she could, for fear or for love, refuse nothing.

<sup>1</sup> Archibald Douglas to Mary Stuart, April 1568 (Harleian).

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The murder was quickly followed by the farce of Bothwell's trial, by the meeting of Mary's last Parliament, by the supper at Ainslie's Tavern. Bothwell was playing for high stakes; he could not afford to wait; the least delay would have been fatal to the enterprise on which he had ventured. The capital was feverish and excited; the sense of the coming calamity was in the air. Omens were not wanting; the higher powers, it was remarked afterwards, watched the development of the plot with interest. "During the journey a raven continually accompanied them from Glasgow to Edinburgh, where it frequently remained perched on the late King's lodging, and sometimes on the Castle. But on the day before his death, it croaked for a very long time upon the house."<sup>1</sup> "The Castle of Edinburgh was rendered to Cockburn of Skirling by the Queen's command. The same day there raise ane vehement tempest of winde, which blew a very great ship out of the rade of Leith, and sic like blew the tail from the cock which stands on the top of the steeple away from it; so the old prophecy came true,—

"When Skirling shall be capitaine  
The cock shall want his tail."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nau's Memorials, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Birrel's Diarey, 21st March 1567.



One man only of those about the Queen did not lose his head. No portent was needed to assure Maitland that unless Mary could escape from the trap that had been set for her, disaster was imminent. He steadily opposed the Bothwell marriage. "The best part of the realm did approve it either by flattery or by their silence;" but Maitland, with hardly an ally, ventured to speak his mind freely. Almost every man of political repute in Scotland signed the bond which recommended Bothwell, as a fit husband, to the Queen; but Maitland's name was not attached.<sup>1</sup> The Earl resented the Secretary's pertinacious opposition; and as it was well known that he was not the man to stick at trifles, it was more than once rumoured that Maitland's life had been threatened. He was in Mary's train when, on "St Mark's even," she was taken by Bothwell at the Almond Bridge. Whether Mary was privy to the "ravishment" will never be known with

<sup>1</sup> According to one list, Moray's name as well as Morton's was adhibited to the bond. It is said that Moray could not have signed, as he had left Edinburgh before the night of the supper; but if the bond was prepared, there was no reason why his signature might not have been attached on an

earlier day. In fact he dined with Bothwell a day or two before he left. Those who argue that Morton did not sign, forget that he admits in his confession that "sindrie of the nobility, and I also, subscriyvit a band with the Earl of Bothwell" for the Queen's marriage.

certainty; Melville, who was also with her, writing in his old age, declared that Captain Blackadder, who had taken him, alleged that it was done with the Queen's own consent. This avowal (which is not quite consistent, it may be observed, with Bothwell's "boast," in the sentence immediately preceding, that he would marry the Queen, "who would or who would not: *yea, whether she would herself or not*")—this avowal has been accepted somewhat hastily as conclusive proof against Mary; the truth being that as evidence it is positively worthless; for it may be safely assumed that Bothwell would in any event have assured his followers that the Queen's consent had been obtained, and that neither resistance nor punishment need be apprehended.

Maitland was carried with Mary to Dunbar, where Bothwell's will was law; and there can be no doubt that for some time thereafter he was in constant peril. Had it not been for Mary's intervention, indeed, it is more than probable that he would have been put to death by his reckless jailer before he had been an hour in the Castle. The rumour that had reached Edinburgh thus appears to have had some ground in fact. "Upon the same day it was alleged that it was devised that William Maitland, younger of Lethington, Secretaire to our

Sovereign Lady, being in her companie, suld have been slain.”<sup>1</sup> When they reached Dunbar both Bothwell and Huntly turned upon Maitland. The Queen threw herself between them. She told Huntly that if a hair of Lethington’s head did perish, she would cause him to forfeit lands and goods and lose his life. One virtue, if one only, Mary had,—nothing, apparently, could shake her steadfast loyalty to her friends.

Drury’s letter, from which these particulars are gleaned, shows that Maitland had taken measures, if his life was again in imminent peril, to escape from the Court. It proves, moreover, that the scheme of using the son against the mother had taken shape at an earlier period than is commonly supposed, and that the motives of the Archbishop of St Andrews in favouring the marriage had been already surmised. Drury was an inveterate gossip, and the political scandal in his letters is often quite unreliable; but on this occasion his information with regard to the position of parties in Scotland a week before the marriage appears to have been obtained from persons who could speak with authority.

“It may please your Honour to be advertised that my last advertisement concerning the de-

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<sup>1</sup> *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 107.



termination of the Lords at Stirling to crown the Prince is true, and also that they mean to deal with the Queen to put away the soldiers, and be better accompanied of her nobility. Otherwise unless she write unto them, or they see writings confirmed with her hand, they will not credit them, but believe that she has been forced, and will defend the Prince and maintain the nobility and liberties of their country. This morning a gentleman of very good credit desired to speak with me secretly in the bounds, which I answered, and met with him. He showed me among the rest a letter sent from the dearest friend that the Lord of Ledington hath, requiring him to advertise me of his great desire to speak with your Honour (by letters till you may do otherwise) concerning those matters that doth concern the service of the Queen's Majesty. He also sends me word that the Queen for certain will marry the Earl Bothwell; whom he says he knows to be a great enemy unto the Queen's Majesty and to her country. Also he advertises me that he minded this night past to escape from the danger he is in and presently to repair to the Lords at Stirling. He meant once to have come to Fast Castle, but altered. He means to escape by this means. He will come out to shoot with the others, for so far he has liberty, having a guard with him,

and between the marks, riding upon a good nag will haste himself to a place appointed where both a fresh horse and company tarry for him. He should have been slain the first night of the Queen's last coming to Dunbar. Huntly should have been at the execution, to whom the Queen said if a hair of his head did perish, she would cause him to forfeit his lands and goods and lose his life. The cause why of late he was supposed to be Bothwell's was for certain letters he wrote to the Earl of Athol and others—to which he was compelled; but, by a trusty messenger, he did advise to which of his writings they should not give credit. It is expected she will presently send for the nobility to come to the marriage, and that she means to levy both horsemen and footmen, which if she doth the Lords mean also to gather. It is judged the Bishop of St Andrews encourages the Queen and Bothwell in this manner to proceed, not for any good will to either of them, but for both their destructions, the rather to bring his friends to their purpose. The Lord of Ledington hath earnestly requested me to convey his message unto your Lordship (affirming that therein I shall do the Queen good service), and that your Honour would let her Highness know he had that to say that would conserve the benefit of both the realms. It is thought by others that after he



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hath been with the Lords he may have cause to repair to your Court.”<sup>1</sup>

Even when it became clear to Maitland that, after what had occurred, the marriage could not be prevented, and that the part he had taken against it had converted Bothwell into a bitter enemy, he remained at the Queen's side. He did his best to smooth the thorny path on which, willingly or unwillingly, she had entered. Mary's instructions to her ambassadors, in which she explains the enormous difficulties by which she had been beset, are understood to have been drawn by Maitland. The key in which they are pitched is studiously moderate. The Queen had been badly treated by her powerful subject; but she was now content to accept the choice of her nobles, and to make the best of a bad business. Bothwell's earlier history having been passed in review, surprise is expressed that a noble who had proved himself so uniformly loyal should have ventured to intrigue against her. Before, however, he had even “afar off” begun to discover his intentions to herself, he had obtained from the assembled Estates their consent to the marriage; and thereafter, finding that the Queen would not listen to his suit, he

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<sup>1</sup> Drury to Cecil, 6th May 1567. Condensed and modernised,—Drury's involved sentences being often barely intelligible.

had forcibly carried her to Dunbar. There, after having again rejected him, she was shown the bond signed by the nobles upon whose counsel and fidelity she had before depended. "Many things we revolved with ourself, but never could find ane outgait." Having at length extorted an unwilling consent, the Earl resolving "either to tine all in an hour, or to bring to pass that thing he had taken in hand," insisted on an immediate marriage. "So ceased he never, till by persuasions and importunate suit, accompanied not the less by force, he has finally driven us to end the work begun at sic time and in sic forme as he thocht might best serve his turn, wherein we cannot dissemble that he has used us otherways than we have deservit at his hand. But now," she concludes, "since it is past, and cannot be brought back again, we will mak the best of it."<sup>1</sup>

Maitland was one of the last of Mary's friends to leave the Court; but the savage violence of Bothwell ultimately exhausted his patience. Athol was already in arms, and he stole away to Athol. "Not long after," Melville says, "the Earl of Bothwell thought to have slain him in the Queen's chamber, had not her Majesty come be-

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<sup>1</sup> Instructions to the Bishop of Dunblane, May 1567. Keith, | ii. 592.

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twixt and saved him ; but he fled *next day*, and tarried with the Earl of Athol."<sup>1</sup> Melville's memory sometimes played him false ; but there is other evidence to the same effect. "Upon the 5th June," according to the contemporary chronicle, "the Secretaire, suspectand his life, left our souveraine lady and the Court, and departit to the Callendar."<sup>2</sup> A few days later he wrote to Cecil :—

"SIR,—The reverence and affection I have ever borne to the Queen my mistress hath been the occasion to stay me so long in company with the Earl of Bothwell at the Court,—as my life hath every day been in danger since he began to aspire to any grandeur, besides the hazard of my reputation in the sight of men of honour, who did think it in me no small spot that, by my countenance and remaining in company with him, I should appear to favour such a man as he is esteemed to be. At length, finding the best part of the nobility resolved to look narrowly to his doings, and being by them required, I would not refuse to join me to them in so just and reasonable a cause, the ground whereof the bearer and Mr Melville can report unto you at length. I pray you that by your means we

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<sup>1</sup> Melville's Memoirs, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 112.

may find the Queen's Majesty's favourable allowance of our proceedings, and in case of need that we may be comforted by her support to further the execution of justice against such as shall be found guilty of an abominable murder, perpetrated on the person of one who had the honour to be of her Majesty's blood. If in the beginning it would please her Majesty to aid these noblemen with some small sums of money to the levying of a number of harquebusiers, it would in my opinion make a short and sudden end of the enterprise, whereunto I pray you put your helping hand. I will not trouble you with many words for lack of leisure, by reason of the bearer's sudden despatch. And so I take my leave of you. From Edinburgh, the 21st of June 1567.—Your Honour's at commandment,

“ W. MAITLAND.”<sup>1</sup>

It has been alleged by his enemies that Maitland, deserting Mary as he had deserted her mother, went over to the faction which had risen against her. It is a serious accusation, and requires to be seriously examined.

It was undoubtedly the general opinion at the time that the Queen had been, and was being, roughly handled by Bothwell. “ I plainly re-

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 21st June 1567.

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fused to proclaim them," Craig said, in his defence to the Assembly, "because I had not her hand write; and also because of the constant bruit (rumour) that the lord had both ravished her and kepted her in captivity."<sup>1</sup> "When I returned to Edinburgh," Melville says, "I dealt with Sir James Balfour not to part with the Castle, whereby he might be an instrument to save the Prince and the Queen, who was disdainfully handled, and with such reproachful language, that in presence of Arthur Erskine I heard her ask for a knife to stab herself; or else—said she—I shall drown myself."<sup>2</sup> "Many of those who were with her," he adds, "were of opinion that she had intelligence with the Lords, especially such as were informed of the many indignities put upon her by the Earl of Bothwell since their marriage. He was so beastly and suspicious that he suffered her not to pass one day in patience, without making her shed abundance of tears." It was consequently believed by many that "her Majesty would fain have been quit of him, but thought shame to be the doer thereof directly herself."<sup>3</sup> "I perceived," Le Croc wrote, on the evening of her marriage day, "a strange formality between her and her

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, ii. 394.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Melville's *Memoirs*, p. 81.

husband, which she begged me to excuse, saying that if I saw her sad, it was because she did not wish to be happy, as she said she never could be, wishing only for death. Yesterday, being all alone in a closet with the Earl Bothwell, she called aloud for them to give her a knife to kill herself with. Those who were in the room adjoining the closet heard her." It was alleged at the time that Bothwell cared so little for the Queen that even after the divorce Lady Jean Gordon continued to reside with him as his wife; and in the Holyrood "interior" under the Bothwell *régime*, which Sir James Melville has preserved for us, the rude force and insolent masterfulness of the truculent Borderer are portrayed with consummate, if unconscious, art. "I found my lord Duke of Orkney sitting at his supper, who welcomed me, saying, I had been a great stranger, desiring me to sit down and sup with him. I said, I had already supped; then he called for a cup of wine and drank to me, saying, 'You had need grow fatter, for,' says he, 'the zeal of the commonwealth hath eaten you up, and made you lean.' I answered that every little member should serve for some use, but the care of the commonwealth appertained most to him, and the rest of the nobility, who should be as fathers of the same. 'I knew well,' says he, 'he would find a pin for every bore.' Then he

fell in discoursing with the gentlewomen, speaking such filthy language, that they and I left him, and went up to the Queen.”<sup>1</sup> The Lords themselves declared that both before and after her marriage Mary was virtually deprived of her liberty; Bothwell, they asserted, “kept her environed with a perpetual guard of two hundred harquebussiers, as well day and night, wherever she went,” admitting few or none to her speech; “for his suspicious heart, brought in fear by the testimony of an evil conscience, would not suffer her subjects to have access to her Majesty, as they were wont to do.” Had they not risen, what, they inquired, would have been the end? Bothwell would have made away with Mary as he had made away with Darnley, and the other wife that he maintained “at home in his house” would have been put in her place.<sup>2</sup>

It is unnecessary to adduce further evidence; it is clear that from the day Mary was taken to Dunbar she was shamefully “mishandled,” and that her misery was great. Bothwell’s head had been turned by his success, and all the evil elements in his brutal nature had come to the top. It must be difficult, one would suppose, for those who have carefully followed the narrative of

<sup>1</sup> Melville’s *Memoirs*, p. 80.

Keith, ii. 677. See also the

<sup>2</sup> The Lords of Scotland to Throckmorton, 11th July 1567. | Minute of the Privy Council of 11th August.



Mary's sufferings at this time to hold that she was a willing victim. When it is pointed out, however, that even on the day of her marriage she was weeping sorely and longing only for death, we are reminded that she was "overmastered by an imperious infatuation,"—a sweeping and somewhat singular apology.<sup>1</sup>

These were the scenes which were being enacted at Holyrood when Maitland stole away from the Court to join the nobles who were arming their vassals. The two parties—Conservative and Radical, Catholic and Calvinist—had by this time coalesced. The faction which had been persistently disloyal were first in the field; but they had latterly been joined by many of the nobles who were personally attached to the Queen. There can be little doubt that the irreconcilables had been sedulously preparing for the crisis which they had helped to accelerate (how far, by flattering his ambition, they had tempted Bothwell to aspire, how far, by forcing her into an anomalous and untenable position, they had tempted Mary to comply, cannot perhaps be precisely known; but that there had been a world of double-dealing is clearly proved); and that they hoped to turn it to their own advantage. But the ostensible object of the

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<sup>1</sup> Burton, iv. 416.

being was to deliver the Queen from Bothwell: and unless this idea had been put forward, no alliance with the royalists would have been practicable. When the pretence succeeded, and when men like Arrol and Argyle and Maitland were found in their ranks, it became all the more necessary to disguise in the meantime their real design. I entertain no doubt that a Government, of which, either as King or Regent, Moray should be head, had been long in contemplation: and Moray was thought to have purposely left the country before the marriage, in order that his partisans might have a freer hand in dealing with his sister. But this was a dead secret as yet; Morton and Lindsay and Glencairn and Grange were in arms, not to subvert the Government, but to release the Queen; and it was on this understanding that they were joined by Maitland.

It is important (not for Maitland's consistency only) that on this point there should be no misunderstanding; and, as it happens, the evidence is conclusive. Robert Melville, writing to Cecil in the beginning of May—a week before the marriage—informed him that the Lords were ready to take the field. “Since the Earl Bothwell did carry the Queen's Majesty violently to Dunbar, where she is judged to be detained without her own liberty, and against her will, divers

noblemen—yea! the most part of the whole subjects of the realm—are very discontent therewith, and apparently will not bear it. The truth is, when she was first carried to Dunbar by him, the Earl of Huntly and my Lord of Ledington were taken as prisoners, and my brother James, with divers other domestic servants; and her Majesty commanded some of her company to pass to Edinburgh and charge the town to be in armour for her rescue. Quhilk they incontinent obeyit, and past without their ports upon foot, but could not help; quhilk shame done by a subject to our Sovereign offends the whole realm.” (Melville, it will be observed, confirms the statement in the ‘Diurnal,’ that the news of the ravishing of her Majesty having been brought to the Provost of Edinburgh, “incontinent the common bell rang, and the inhabitants thereof ran to armour and wappynnis, the portes was steekit, the artillery of the castle shot.”<sup>1</sup>) “And it appears both Papist and Protestant joins together with an earnest affection for the weill of their country. The said Lords are gone to their counties to assemble their friends together with sic expedition as they may.”<sup>2</sup> The Proclamation issued by the Privy Council on 6th June (on the pre-

<sup>1</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents, 24th April, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Melville to Cecil,

7th May 1567. National MSS. of England, Part III., No. 1x.

amble that the Queen's Majesty's most noble person is and has been for a long space detained in captivity and thralldom), goes on to declare that the nobility have assembled to deliver her from bondage and captivity. Again, in the Proclamation of 12th June, it is stated that James, Earl Bothwell, having, on the 24th April, put violent hands on our Sovereign Lady's most noble person, and having since then detained her in captivity, the Lords have risen to deliver her from her prison. In the Minutes of June 16, June 21, June 26, July 7, July 9, and August 11, the same plea is repeated,—the Peers had pursued and were pursuing Bothwell for having laid violent hands upon the Queen.<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that most of these minutes are of later date than Carberry; so that even after Mary had been sent to Lochleven, the nobles (in whose counsels by this time Morton had acquired a commanding influence) did not venture to imply that she was Bothwell's accomplice. The pretence on which she was sent to Lochleven (*viz.*, that she had refused to abandon Bothwell) will be afterwards examined; what I am at present concerned to show is, that the nobles, when Maitland joined them, were in arms, not against Mary, but against Bothwell, her jailer.

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<sup>1</sup> Register of Privy Council, vol. i. pp. 519-545.

It is difficult indeed to read the proclamations of the Lords with patience. They were written by the men who had plotted against the Queen. They were written by the men who were the accomplices of Bothwell. The declaration that they had risen to release Mary was ridiculous pretence; the declaration that they had risen to revenge Darnley was odious hypocrisy. I speak, of course, of the faction which Morton led. There were men in the ranks of the Confederate Lords from an early period who were the true friends of Mary Stuart; later on these were joined by Maitland. But in so far as the Moray-Morton faction had a hand in its production, the defence of their policy which is contained in the public records is grotesquely insincere and transparently false.

Maitland at least was for the Queen. It was Bothwell who drove him from the Court; it was to rid the Queen of Bothwell that he joined the Lords. He had been with her throughout the whole dismal business; he had witnessed her humiliations; he had listened to her complaints; yet this acute and observant diplomatist, who had enjoyed the closest intimacy with his mistress, had obviously failed to discover any indications of that overpowering passion which, as was afterwards alleged, had driven her into Bothwell's arms. "Maitland, in proportion as he favoured

the Queen's interest, hated Bothwell as a perfidious villain, from whom his own life was in danger."<sup>1</sup> "Sir William Matlane had joined himself before to the Lords for hatred of Bothwell. Now being rid of him he writeth to the Queen offering his service ; sheweth how it might stand her in good stead by the apologue of the mouse delivering the lion taken in the nets."<sup>2</sup> The testimony of Melville, Herries, Nau, and other contemporary writers, is to the same effect ; Maitland was not a traitor ; though he left the Court he did not desert the Queen. "He only sought to rescue her from Bothwell."<sup>3</sup> Throckmorton, to whose interesting letters I must refer at greater length immediately, was sent by Elizabeth to Scotland to remonstrate with the Lords, and at Fast Castle he was met by Maitland. Maitland was for Mary, Throckmorton emphatically declared, but he added despondently,—“God knows he is fortified with very slender company in this opinion.”

In one respect Throckmorton was mistaken. The Lords, indeed, would have had him believe

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan, Book xix.

<sup>2</sup> Calderwood, ii. 371. Nau says, —“Lethington sent a small oval ornament of gold on which was enamelled Æsop's fable of the lion enclosed in the

net, with these words in Italian written round it,—‘A chi basto l'animo, non mancano le forze.’—Memorials, p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Leslie's Narrative, Scottish Catholics, p. 125.



that Mary was hated by the people, who were eager for her execution. So far as the Knoxian fanatics and the rabble of the capital were concerned, this was possibly true enough. Throckmorton mentions that the Ecclesiastical Convention was again in session; and it was from the lips of these austere zealots that the sentence of death proceeded. Knox himself, it need not be doubted, would, with the zest of a Hebrew prophet, have hewed the idolatress in pieces before the Lord. But the Knoxian fanatics and the rabble of the capital were not the people of Scotland. This is the mistake that so many modern historians have made,—they have confounded the nation at large with an active and organised minority. To do them justice, Knox and his allies did not deny that they were the minority; on the contrary, they gloried in their numerical inferiority. The Lord was on their side; it mattered not who was against them. Knox never wearied of repeating that the most part of men were addicted to idolatry. Edinburgh was the stronghold of the precise Protestants; but when it was proposed to take a plebiscite of the citizens as to what form of religion should be provisionally established, “the hail brethren of the Congregation within this town” vehemently objected. They could not consent, they said, that “God’s truth should be



subject to voting of man ;” “for it is na new thing but mair nor notour that fra the beginning of the wide warld to this day, and even now in all countries and touns, the maist part of men has ever been against God and His house.”<sup>1</sup> In a pastoral letter, written by Knox after Mary had escaped from Lochleven, he expressed his deep regret that they had not put her to death when she was in their hands. The danger would not have been great, he added, “for although in number the wicked might have exceeded the faithful,” yet “the little flock” would have been as victorious as in former contests.<sup>2</sup> So that it is a mistake to assume that in July 1567 the nation was hostile to Mary. The mass of the people had been taken unawares ; they believed the Lords when they declared that they were fighting for the Queen ; and before the fraud was discovered the mischief was done. The Confederates at Carberry, to use a familiar phrase, won by a fluke. It is universally admitted that had the Queen remained at Dunbar, “could she have had patience to stay at Dunbar for three or four days without any stir,” the Lords would have dispersed. “The people did not join as was expected ;” the leaders were divided ; some were adversaries, some were neu-

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<sup>1</sup> Keith, i. 487.

<sup>2</sup> Keith, iii. 199.

trals; "so that they were even thinking to dissolve, and leave off their enterprise to another time, and had absolutely done so."<sup>1</sup> That is Knox's admission; Buchanan's is even more unqualified. "Wherefore the ardour of the people having subsided, perceiving no likelihood of their rising being successful, and almost reduced to extremity, they already deliberated about dispersing without accomplishing their design."<sup>2</sup> But a fatal imprudence brought Mary to Carberry Hill. Yet in spite of calumny and calamity, the sympathy of the people could not be restrained. The tide, if it had ever run against her, suddenly turned. The Lords could not count even upon the Edinburgh rabble; for the democracy of the capital was as fickle as it was fierce. The narrative of the events that immediately followed Carberry, as given in the 'Historie of King James the Sext,' is extremely instructive. "She being credulous rendered herself willingly to the Lords; who irreverently brought her into Edinburgh about seven hours at even, and keptit her straightly within the Provost's lodging in the chief street; and on the morn fixit a white banner in her sight, wherein was painted the effigy of King Henry her husband, lying deed at the root of a green growing tree, and the

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, ii. 558.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan, Book xviii.

picture of the young Prince sitting on his knees with his hands and countenance toward heaven, with this inscription, *Judge and revenge my cause, O Lord!* This sight greivt her great-umlie, and therefore she burst forth exceeding tears, with exclamation against these Lords wha held her in captivitie, crying to the people for Christ's cause to relieve her from the hands of these tyrants. The people of the town convenit to her in great number, and perceiving her so afflicted in mind had pitie and compassion of her estait. The Lords perceiving that, came unto her with dissimulat countenance, with reverence and fair speches, and said that their intention was noways to thrall her, and therefore immediately would repone her with freedom to her ain palace of Halyruidhouse, to do as she list; whereby she was so pacified as the people willingly departed; And on the next evening, to colour their pretences, conveyed her to the palace, and then assembled themselves in counsel to advise what should be thought best to be done; And it was decernit, that immediately she should be transported to the fortalice of Lochleven, and there to be detenit in captivitie during her life, and constranit to transfer the authority of her Crown from her person to the young Prince her son; to the end that they might rule as they listed, without any controul of lawful authority;

whilk continued for many years.”<sup>1</sup> The author of this narrative, it may be objected, is a partial witness ; but he is corroborated by writers who were the bitterest critics of the Queen. “Hatred,” Buchanan admits, “was turned into compassion ” ; Calderwood confesses that “the hatred of the people was now by process of time turned into pitie ;” and Spottiswoode is even more emphatic ; —“The common people also, who a little before seemed most incensed, pitying the Queen’s estate, did heavily lament the calamity wherein she was fallen.”<sup>2</sup>

The intensity of the public feeling accounts for the midnight ride to Lochleven. It had become apparent to Morton and his more astute and unscrupulous allies that if the revolution was to succeed, a vigorous policy must be instantly initiated. The Queen must be silenced ; the Queen must be secluded. But how were they to justify the forcible detention of the sovereign on whose behalf, as they alleged, they were in arms ? There were honest men among them. No one had expressed his detestation of the murder and of the marriage more freely than Grange ; but Grange was a soldier of unblemished repute,—an obstinate,

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<sup>1</sup> The Historie of King James the Sext, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Calderwood, ii. 37. Spottiswoode, ii. 63.

intractable, high-minded, chivalrous gentleman. Grange would not lend himself to a fraud; and, since Mary had trusted herself to his honour, he had come to believe that she was more sinned against than sinning. Grange was assured—so it was said—that Mary was still devoted to Bothwell; that she had refused to leave him; that a loving letter, which she had addressed to him, had been intercepted. Even her apologists need not hesitate to admit that the Queen was at this moment in a position of grave embarrassment. Every path she could follow was beset with peril. Whether she was *enciente* has been doubted; she believed that she was, and her belief was probably well founded.<sup>1</sup> She might by this time have concluded that nothing was left for her but (in her own words) “to make the best of it.” And it is easy to understand, when she found that his accomplices had turned upon him like a pack

<sup>1</sup> See Throckmorton's letter of 18th July, and the account of the miscarriage by Nau, p. 60. Mr Froude says (ix. 65) that “the Queen remained at Dunbar to suffer, according to her subsequent explanation of what befell her, the violence which rendered her marriage with Bothwell a necessity, if the offspring which she expected from it was to be born legiti-

mate.” So far as I am aware, the reason assigned by Mr Froude—that the marriage was necessary to legitimate the expected offspring—was never assigned by Mary. When Throckmorton wrote, Mary had been *married* for upwards of two months, and he alluded to the issue of the marriage.



of famished wolves, how the woman who had never loved Bothwell in his prosperous days, may have stood loyally by him in his adversity. These were the traitors who had truly murdered Darnley, and yet they dared to flaunt a banner in the face of heaven which called for vengeance on his murderers,—“ Judge and avenge my cause, O Lord ! ” What perfidy, she might well ask, could compare with this ? Judas betrayed his Lord with a kiss ; but he did not add to his guilt by professing that another had done it : he went and hanged himself. Although a high-spirited woman like Mary Stuart may possibly have been influenced by such feelings as I have indicated, their existence is purely conjectural. Mary may have declined to separate herself from Bothwell, or she may not ; we cannot tell : no one was allowed to see her, no one was allowed to speak with her,—not even the envoy of Elizabeth, not even the Ambassador of France ; we only know *what the Lords said that she said*. The value of hearsay evidence, tainted as this was, will be considered hereafter ; but I may say here that the motive that tempted them to lie, if they did lie, is obvious enough. An apology was needed for their sudden change of front ; and the pretence that Mary clung with unreason-

ing obstinacy to her lover, was probably as good as any other that could be invented at the moment. The specific allegation that on the night of her capture she addressed a few lines of ardent devotion to Bothwell is now generally discredited,—even Hume and the younger Tytler (both hostile to Mary) admitting that the writing, if any such there was, must have been fabricated. Mary Stuart, whatever else she might be, was not a fool; and it would have been monstrous folly to expect that a letter so fatally compromising would escape the vigilance of her keepers. We may be tolerably sure, moreover, that if the letter had been intercepted, it would have been produced. Melville informs us that “it was alleged” that a letter to Bothwell, written the night she was taken, was used to silence Kirkaldy’s scruples. “Grange was yet so angry that, had it not been for the letter, he had instantly left them.” But in the answer of the Lords of Scotland to the remonstrances of Elizabeth,—prepared not later than July 11th, only three weeks after Carberry,—there is no allusion to the intercepted letter;<sup>1</sup> and as their defence

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<sup>1</sup> Nor, it may be added, is there any allusion to those other letters which they afterwards alleged had at this time | been already for three weeks in their hands,—the Casket Letters.



proceeded on the plea that Mary still clung to Bothwell, it may be confidently assumed that had such an invaluable and indeed conclusive piece of evidence been in their possession, it would then and there have been produced. Thus there is no direct evidence to show that Mary parted from Bothwell reluctantly, and there is plenty of the best evidence to show that after they were parted she never manifested the least desire to rejoin him. The delirium—the infatuation of the most polished and brilliant woman of her age for an ill-favoured and illiterate lover of forty—was obviously as transient as it was unaccountable.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the whole, I am inclined to hold that, after being more or less forced into the marriage, Mary had resolved “to make the best of it.” Though she did not love Bothwell, she must have loved the Lords still less, and she may have set herself to conquer her repugnance to an uncongenial alliance. There is reason to believe that Lethington was taken aback by her passion of resentment at the treachery of the Lords, and her resolution to remain with the man who had been really forced upon her by Morton and his allies. Maitland is represented as saying at a later

period that “the same night the Queen was brought to Edinburgh I myself made the offer to her, gif she would abandon my Lord Bothwell she should have as thankful obedience as ever she had since she came to Scotland. But no ways would she consent to leave my Lord Bothwell, and so she was put into Lochleven, at the which time we hoped that all men should have assisted to the revenge of the king’s murder, but never ane came to us after Carberry Hill; on the contrary the Lord Huntly and many others rose up against us, so that they were a greater party than we.”—Bannatyne’s

Meantime—during these anxious days—Maitland did what he could. He was fighting for Mary's life. The gloomy fanatics who had been summoned to the Convention thirsted for her blood. It was a plain duty, they declared, to put her to death. The Lord had delivered her into their hands. There can be no doubt that for some days her peril was great; her own friends, finding how they had been misled by the revolutionary faction, were one by one stealing away from the capital; Morton and Knox remained—Morton, Knox, and their allies; and Morton was as unscrupulous as Knox was "austere."<sup>1</sup> We do not know all that occurred after Carberry; the letters of Drury were written from Berwick, and most of his correspondents in Scotland were ignorant or intemperate partisans; but, from Throckmorton's confidential correspondence with the English Court after his arrival at the Scottish capital, it may be fairly concluded, I think, that to Maitland—who had been on various occasions of essential service to Morton—Mary at this time owed her life.

Of Mary Stuart, however, as an independent

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Journal, p. 158. These words recall an earlier declaration in which Mary's repugnance to break her plighted word is emphatically insisted on.—*Supra*,

p. 146.

<sup>1</sup> Knox returned on 6th July, "very austere."—Throckmorton to Cecil, 18th July.

princess, there was now an end. The conspiracies of the disaffected nobles, which had been more than once defeated by her resolute spirit, were at length completely successful, and there were grim rejoicings in the Puritan camp. If Mary was the accomplice of Bothwell, she deserved all that she got; if she was the innocent victim of an unscrupulous policy, which in the name of pure religion traded on sedition and did not shrink from crime, the sympathy that she has received has not been exaggerated. Maitland's fixed idea had hitherto been that the union of the kingdoms was a political necessity, and that only through Mary Stuart could Union be secured. I do not think that he ever seriously wavered in his loyalty to his mistress; but it is interesting to note that—even when the cloud was blackest—he would listen to no terms of composition which did not involve the acknowledgment by Elizabeth, in one form or other, of the Scottish title. Throckmorton reported that some talk had passed between him and the Secretary with reference to the custody of the Prince. He had found from Lethington, he said, that the principal point that would induce the Lords to deliver their prince into England would be the recognition of his title to the succession of the Crown of England, in default of issue of Elizabeth's body. "I do well

perceive that these men will never be brought to deliver their Prince into England except upon this condition ;” “ for,” saith Lethington, “ *that* taking place, the Prince shall be as dear to the people of England as to the people of Scotland ; and the one will be as careful of his preservation as the other. Otherwise,” he saith, “ all things considered, it will be reported that the Scotsmen have put their Prince to be kept in safety, as those which commit the sheep to be kept by the wolves.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Leicester, 24th July 1567.

**BOOK III.**

**FROM THE ABDICATION OF MARY IN 1567 TO  
THE FALL OF THE CASTLE IN 1573**



## CHAPTER ONE.

### MAITLAND AND MORAY.

**M**AITLAND'S position after the Lords had broken with Mary was one of extreme difficulty. To save the Queen's life was his first object; to bring about some reasonable composition between her and the Scottish Peers was his next. Moray was away—having prudently absented himself, as was his habit; but Maitland was obviously under the impression that he might count on Moray's help. He was quickly undeceived. He saw at once—or at least within a few days of the Regent's return—that James Stuart, if he did not take his sister's life, would not hesitate to assail her honour. Moray—whose sober gait and homely address cloaked a towering ambition—was bent, for one reason or other, upon an irreparable breach. Maitland believed, on the other hand, that, with the Scottish people divided as they were, years of bloody and bootless war could only be avoided by a policy of



forbearance. To seek a road from which there could be no return, to fight the quarrel out to the bitter end, seemed to him to be folly,—how far better it would be if only by tact and temper some reasonable compromise could be effected! But to save Mary's life he had to yield himself to the stream until he was strong enough to breast it. "Pliant in their direction, unshaken in their aim," was said of the Jesuit fathers; and the moralists who are unwilling to own that under any pressure is a politic pliancy admissible, will conclude that Maitland's conduct during the two years that followed Mary's fall cannot be justified. Nor—though I believe that the more it is examined and the better it is understood, the less will it be condemned—do I altogether defend it. The most honest of men could not have occupied so equivocal a position with perfect honesty. Yet it is abundantly clear from contemporary testimony that no one was deceived. All Scotland knew that Lethington was on Mary's side; all Scotland knew that Lethington held that Moray had played his sister false. Moray himself knew it; and when he had finally and decisively thrown in his lot with Morton, who became, as was said at the time, his "second self," the cordial relations with Maitland necessarily ceased. Maitland, whose scorn of pharisaic pretence scorched like fire, was not misled

by Moray's sophistry; and his tacit condemnation must have been ill to bear. But I anticipate. Moray was still in France, from whence indeed he was only permitted to depart on the understanding that he disapproved of the violence of the disaffected nobles, and that he was going home, as he said, to save his sister's life.

Among the houses where the English envoys were wont to rest themselves during their leisurely progress to the Scottish capital, Whittinghame and Fast Castle were two of the most noted. Whittinghame belonged to a Douglas, Fast Castle to a Hume; and it was at Fast Castle—on the rocky shore of the Northern Sea—that Throckmorton, despatched in haste by Elizabeth to learn what had happened in Scotland, was met by Lethington. Throckmorton was an old friend of the Scottish Secretary: and as they could communicate freely and frankly with each other, the letters in which his negotiations with the nobles are described, are, to whoever is interested in Maitland's career, of really inestimable value.

It must be premised that the ostensible object of Throckmorton's mission was, as he told the French ambassador at Ware, "to comfort the Queen of Scots in this her calamity, which her Majesty did take for too great an indignity to be shewed to a Queen by her subjects, and to

procure her liberty.”<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth’s exaggerated expressions of sympathy were not believed by those who knew her best to be entirely genuine; they believed, on the contrary, that Throckmorton was sent not merely to lecture Mary on her misconduct (Elizabeth would have been more than woman had she neglected to improve the occasion), but to quicken the resentment of the insurgent lords against their sovereign. It must be admitted that the tone she adopted in addressing an assembly of proud and turbulent nobles was eminently calculated to bring about such a result,—a result, be it observed, entirely consistent with the policy which had been constantly pursued by the English government since Mary’s return to Scotland.

“I lodged at Fast Castle that night, accompanied by the Lord Hume, the Lord of Ledington, and James Melville, where I was entreated very well according to the state of the place; which is fitter to lodge prisoners than folks at liberty. As it is very little, so it is very strong.” He had conferred with Lethington, and had found that the Lords were naturally suspicious of Elizabeth’s motives, and would in the meantime join neither with France nor England. “For they think it convenient to proceed with

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil, 2d July 1567.

you both *pari passu*, for that was my Lord of Ledington's term." The envoy proceeded to enlarge on Elizabeth's good faith; "but at these things the Lord of Ledington smiled and shook his head, and said, 'It were better for us you would let us alone, than neither to do us nor yourselves good, as I fear me in the end it will prove,'—adding, later on, 'If you will do us no good, do us no harm, and we will provide for ourselves.'" <sup>1</sup>

Throckmorton arrived in Edinburgh on July 12th. The next day, being Sunday, was held as a solemn communion and solemn fast; and the scrupulous Morton, declining to transact any secular business on that day, was unable to receive the English envoy. Lethington, however, came to him in the afternoon. During the interview, in which the distrust of Elizabeth's motives was accentuated, Throckmorton gathered that he would not be permitted to see Mary. "I would all our company," Lethington declared, "were as well willing to accomplish your sovereign's intents and desires as I am; for my own part I am but one, and that of the meanest sort, and there be many noblemen, and such as have great interest in the matter; marry, you shall be assured, I will employ my credit as much

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil, 12th July 1567.

as lieth in me to satisfy the Queen your mistress." The General Assembly of the Church, he added, was to meet on the 20th; and Throckmorton apprehended, "unless the Lord of Ledington and some others who be best affected to her, do provide some remedy," that measures of extreme severity to the Queen would be taken by Knox and his friends. The Calvinistic rabble of the capital were bitter against her. "The common people do greatly dishonour the Queen,—the women be most furious and impudent against her, and yet the men be mad enough."<sup>1</sup>

Throckmorton wrote two days afterwards that he was still denied access to the Queen, that Knox had returned to town, and, armed with precedents from Holy Writ, was expected to be "very austere" in his denunciations of "that wicked woman." "The Queen is in very great danger of her life, by reason that the people assembled at this Convention do mind vehemently the destruction of her."<sup>2</sup> Next day he reported that "the repair to this town doth begin to be great," and that the matter was like to be brought to one of four issues. Some would deprive Mary of her estate and her life, others would keep her in prison, others would have her appoint a coun-

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil, 14th July 1567. | <sup>2</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil and Elizabeth, 18th July 1567.



cil of the nobles to govern the kingdom,—whereas Lethington, “though fortified with very slender company,” was in favour of lenity. He would “restore the Queen to her liberty and royal estate, taking securities for the preservation of the Prince and the banishment of Bothwell.” Knox, on the other hand, was eager for her execution. “This day being at Mr Knox’s sermon, who took a piece of the Scripture forth of the book of the Kings, and did inveigh vehemently against the Queen, and persuaded extremities towards her by the application of his text.” He had again conferred with Lethington, who had told him that the Lords, who had concluded that, except fair words, they would have little support or favour from Elizabeth, were still in no sort willing that he should see the Queen.<sup>1</sup>

Throckmorton, convinced now that his embassy would fail, was urgent for an answer. “The Earl Morton answered me, That shortly I should hear answer from them; but the day being destined (as I did see) to the Communion, continual preaching, and common prayer, they could not be absent nor attend matters of the world; for first they must seek the matters of God, and take counsel of Him who could best direct them. Notwithstanding, he promised

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil, 19th and 20th July 1567.

there should be no delays used." "And the same night, about 11 of the clock, the Lord of Lidington came to me at my lodgings." Lethington brought with him the answer of the Lords in writing, which was so far unfavourable; and then, being pressed by Throckmorton, frankly explained his own view. "You see our humour here and how we be bent. Let the Queen your sovereign and her council be well advised; for surely you run a course which will breed us great peril and trouble, and yourselves most of all. *Do you not see that it doth not lie in my power to do that I fainest would do, which is to have the Queen my mistress in estate in person and in honour?* I know well enough it is not hidden from you the extremity that the chiefest of our Assembly be in concerning the ending of this matter. You heard yesterday, and somewhat this day, how both you and I were publickly taxed in the preachings, though we were not named. We must be fain to make a virtue of necessity, and forbear neither to do ourselves good, the Queen, nor our country. And the Queen your mistress had need to take heed that she make not Scotland by her dealings better French than either it would be or should be. You see in whose hands resteth the power. You know the Frenchmen have a saying, 'Il pert le jeu qui laisse la partie.' (He loses the



that quits the side.) To my great grief I see it, that the Queen my sovereign may not abide amongst us. And this is not time to her good, if she be ordained to have any. Therefore take heed that the Queen your sovereign do not lose altogether the goodwill of this company irrecoverably; for though there be some amongst us which would retain our Prince, and amity to England's devotion, yet I can assure you if the Queen's majesty deal not otherwise than she doth you will lose all. And it shall not lie in the power of your well-willers to help it, no more than it lieth in our power now to help the Queen our sovereign."<sup>1</sup> The Lords had said in their answer that they would "not proceed further than justice and *the necessity of the case* shall lead us." Throckmorton pointed out that the limitation was extremely elastic; whereupon Lethington, with ironical courtesy, complimented the diplomatist on his remarkable penetration. "When I had perused this writing delivered to me by the Lord of Lidington, I asked him how far these words, 'Necessity of their cause,' in the end of the same did extend,

<sup>1</sup> "The Laird of Lethington," he adds afterwards, "hath travelled with sundry of the wisest to make them desist from dealing in any matter

which doth concern the Queen" without effect. See also his letter of the 9th August to Cecil.

and how far they might be led? He made me none other answer, but shaking his head said, *Vous estes ung renard.*"<sup>1</sup>

At last, on the 24th, when the Lords, yielding to the clamour of the extreme Calvinistic faction, had resolved to dethrone the Queen, and to crown the Prince, Throckmorton was admitted to an interview with the Council. "Whereupon, accompanied by the Lord of Lidington and others, I went to the Tolbooth. There I found the Lords set about a long table, and round about them a great number of barons and gentlemen, to the number of forty, bestowed upon seats. At my coming in they did all rise; and after I had saluted and embraced such as I had not seen before, we sat down. Then the Lord of Lidington and the Earl of Morton required me to declare unto that assembly such matters as I had to open on your Majesty's behalf. Then I did deliver unto them all the points of your Majesty's instructions, pressing earnestly the enlargement of the Queen, and their permission to let me have access unto her. I was answered by the Lord of Lidington, who, after secret conference with the Earl of Morton at the board's end, said thus unto me,—'My Lord Ambassador, to part of these matters the Lords have al-

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 21st July 1567.

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ready these days past answered you ; and for the rest they pray you to have patience, that they may consult upon them.' Whereupon I retired myself with the same Lords which brought me thither." The answer of the Council was brought to him in the evening by Lethington. Mary was in strict confinement at Lochleven, and even Elizabeth's envoy, they had decided, could not have access to her.<sup>1</sup>

The singular anxiety shown by the Lords to prevent any communication with the captive Queen cannot but excite suspicion and surprise. Why, for instance, was Elizabeth's envoy excluded? Reports of what Mary said in her confinement were freely circulated in the capital ; but as no one except her jailers were permitted to pass the doors of her prison, the words attributed to her are, as evidence against her, of no value whatever.

While this was the position of affairs in Scotland, Moray was on his way home. Fearing that he might be detained, he had stolen away from Paris, and had crossed the Channel in an English fishing-boat.

I am far from confident that the estimate I have formed of Moray's character is just. There must be something about the grave and reticent

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 25th July 1567.

leader of the "precise Protestants"—a figure so attractive to many highly competent judges—which I have failed to appreciate. One feels, moreover—in Moray's case perhaps more than in most—that he belongs to a world which has little in common with our own, and to a society with which our relations are strained. When we read the Order of the Privy Council, which (starting from the preamble that "our auld enemies of England are in readiness to invade the realm, and to burn, herry, slay, and destroy the lieges of the same"), requires beacon-fires to be constantly maintained between Berwick and Linlithgow,—“the first bail to be made and kept upon Saint Abb's Head, the second bail to be made and kept upon Dowhill about Fast Castle, the third bail to be put and kept upon the Dounlaw about Spott, the fourth bail to be put and kept upon North Berwick law, the fifth bail to be made and kept upon Dounprenderlaw, the sixth bail to be made and kept upon Arthur Seat or the Castel of Edinburgh, and the seventh bail to be upon Binningscrag about Linlithgow”<sup>1</sup> (from whence Stirling and the inland counties might be duly warned),—when we read this, and remember how in our time friendly messages flash quick as thought from Tay or Tweed to

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<sup>1</sup> Register of Privy Council, i. 73.

Thames or Severn, and how the man who has slept at Perth may be at Westminster in time to dine; or when we read the return obtained by Cecil in 1567, from which it appeared that though there were 512 Frenchmen and 2993 Dutchmen in London, the Scotsmen numbered 36 all told,<sup>1</sup> when we read this, and remember how the metropolis is now overrun by those who were themselves born, or whose fathers were born, on the further side of the Tweed, the enormous change that has taken place is vividly impressed upon our minds. The fashion of the world to which Knox and Moray belonged has passed away. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that we live on a different planet.

Nor is it our environment only that has altered. "Hujuscemodi heroicæ conjunctiones, ex quibus multorum populorum et regnorum salus dependit, per manum Domini reguntur, cujus est orbis terrarum et omnes inhabitantes eum." These words are taken from an official letter addressed by Christopher Mundt to Sir William Cecil.<sup>2</sup> What would we think of a diplomatic despatch signed by Lord Palmerston or Lord Salisbury conceived in this vein? That it was a grotesque caricature, if not an impudent fabrication, would be the unhesitating verdict. Our mode of speech,

<sup>1</sup> Haynes, p. 462.

<sup>2</sup> 12th October 1563. Haynes, p. 405.

our cast of thought, have so completely changed, that the difficulty of understanding the men to whom Mundt's style was familiar, must often prove insuperable. I am willing to admit that to the inability to bridge the gulf my incapacity to do justice to Moray is possibly to be attributed. I do not think that he was a great man; I am not sure that he was a good one.

Not even the most fanatical admirer has found in James Stuart's career any of the brilliant qualities of genius. His intellect was not inventive; he had little vivacity of mind or individuality of character. He was a considerable soldier, a competent politician; but, with no original force, he was unable to stand alone, and he leant successively upon Knox, and Maitland, and Morton. His piety was sincere; but it failed to curb his cupidity and his ambition. The moral loftiness of a pure and decent life has been not extravagantly eulogised; yet it cannot be denied that he was mercenary, greedy of power, and that he lent himself with abject facility to the tortuous intrigues of Elizabeth. The pliancy of Lethington was not inconsistent with independence and self-respect; but the shrill appeals for mercy which Moray, when confronted by evil fortune, addressed to Mary, to Elizabeth, to Darnley, to Rizzio, were profoundly undignified. To smooth the way to an earldom, he worried



Huntly into rebellion.<sup>1</sup> He betrayed Norfolk, he betrayed Northumberland, he betrayed his sister. Moody in temper, churlish in manner; close, cold, and calculating; undemonstrative, unimaginative,—he had few of the attractive qualities which win the regard of the people; yet his patient force, his frigid obstinacy, supplied the lack of more brilliant parts. During his life (except by the gloomy zealots of the Congregation) he was little liked; but his tragic end silenced the calumnies of partisans, and the memory of the “good Regent” is still widely revered.

Moray was met at Berwick by Melville, and at Whittinghame by Maitland. Melville had been sent on in advance by Lethington to impress the views held by the party he led upon

<sup>1</sup> No adequate explanation of the incidents that ended in Huntly's death at Corrichie has yet been offered. When he was dead he was denounced on all hands; but it must not be forgotten that only a few days before his death, the not too friendly Randolph wrote from Old Aberdeen (31st August 1562),—“Huntly is here, not well in his Prince's favour; and how well that man doth deserve, your honour knoweth, by his upright dealing with all

men that he hath to do with.” Upon the whole, the explanation that he was “worried into rebellion” by Moray appears the most probable. Maitland, for his part, seems to have held that both Huntly and “the Duke” were far too powerful. The singular speech after Corrichie, which Knox assigns to Maitland, can hardly be regarded as authentic. It is curiously out of keeping with the character of the man.



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the Regent. "That part of the Lords"—this is Melville's narrative—"that did still bear a great love for the Queen, and had compassion upon her estate, and who had entered upon the enterprise only for safety of the prince and punishment of the murder, as among others the Earl of Athol and Secretary Lidington, sent their instructions with me to my Lord of Moray praying him in their name to behave himself gently and humbly with the Queen, and to procure as much favour for her as he could." Melville intimates that Moray appeared not unwilling to follow his advice. "But when he went to see the Queen at Lochleven, instead of comforting her, and following the good counsel he had gotten, he entered instantly with her Majesty in reproaches, giving her such injurious language as was like to break her heart. We who found fault with that procedure lost his favour. The injuries were such that they cut the thread of love and credit betwixt the Queen and him for ever."<sup>1</sup>

The severity of Moray at his interview with his sister has been otherwise explained. When he first heard that he was to be Regent he was "right glad"; but he afterwards affected to hold back. He was anxious, it appeared, that the

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<sup>1</sup> Melville Memoirs, p. 87.

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Queen herself should invite him to accept the Regency. The severity of his language, the hardness of his manner, were intended to intimidate her. Mary was to be made to believe that she was in imminent peril, and that her brother only could save her. Throckmorton's account of the meeting tends to confirm this impression. The English envoy, who had been satisfied from the first that "Moray will run the course that these men do, and be partaker of their fortunes,"<sup>1</sup> was not surprised to learn that Moray, when he went to Lochleven on 15th August, "behaved himself rather like a ghostly father unto her than like a counsellor." The Queen wept bitterly; but Moray was unmoved. "In conclusion, the Earl of Moray left her that night in hope of nothing but of God's mercy, willing her to seek *that* as her chiefest refuge. And so they parted."

Next morning "betime" the play was played out. Moray affected to relent. If it was in his power, her life would be spared. Nay, he would assure her of her life on one condition. The condition, if not expressed, was implied.

Mary, who had spent the night in a state of cruel uncertainty—for what she could tell, the scaffold might be preparing in the courtyard of the castle—"took him in her arms and kissed

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil, 12th August 1567.

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him, requiring him to accept the Regency of the realm."

On Moray's return to Edinburgh he saw Throckmorton, and gave him his version of the interview. But when Throckmorton asked to be allowed to declare Elizabeth's commission, he was put off to a more convenient season. "The Earl of Moray answered, We must now serve God, for the preacher tarryeth for us, and after the sermon we must advise of a time to confer with you. And so the said Earl took his leave of me."<sup>1</sup>

Throckmorton was not received by Moray till the 21st, when the decision of the Council was communicated to him by Maitland. The Queen of England had charged them to set Mary at liberty. But the Queen of England was not their sovereign. They were the subjects of another prince. And—he added with significant emphasis—there was no way to do Mary so much harm as to precipitate matters before they were ripe. A few days later Throckmorton was distinctly informed that they would not permit him to see the Queen.<sup>2</sup>

Elizabeth's envoy prepared to leave. A present of gilt plate had been prepared for him, and

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil, 20th August 1567.

<sup>2</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil, 22d August, 1st September 1567.

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he was asked to accept it, but he refused. He could accept no present, he said, except from the Queen their sovereign. Lethington accompanied him to his lodgings, and again pressed him to accept the gift. "Whereunto I did not yield, but so took my leave of him."<sup>1</sup>

"The time was not ripe." The extreme faction was still in power. The people as a whole had been taken by surprise, and were not yet prepared for vigorous action on behalf of their sovereign. The Queen must wait. She was safer in prison. *That* was the policy which Maitland advocated.

Throckmorton left Edinburgh on 30th August 1567; Mary escaped from Lochleven on 2d May 1568. In Maitland's opinion, as in Melville's, her escape was premature. "She escaped out of Lochleven too hastily ere the time was ripe." Had she had patience to wait, the nation, which was wearying of the Regent's rule, would have risen for her as one man. But her ill-luck was persistent. She repeated the mistake she had made at Carberry.

During the intervening months we hear little of Maitland, who was occupied with the routine duties of administration. The speech which he delivered on behalf of Moray at the opening of

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<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Cecil, 1st September 1567.

Parliament in December has been preserved. It is a skilful sketch in neutral tint,—the official manifesto of the Regent's Government; and though the evident anxiety to avoid the dangerous quicksands of controversy is very characteristic of its author, it cannot otherwise be taken as representing his personal convictions. As a more than usually interesting example of a "Queen's speech" to the Scottish Parliament of the sixteenth century, the reader, however, may wish to see it:—

"If at any time heretofore parliaments have been thought necessary or profitable, I think whosoever shall look into the present estate of this realm will judge that is not without purpose that you are assembled at this time. And *that* for divers considerations whereof every one is of sufficient consequence to require this general convention; to wit, the establishing of one uniform religion; the acknowledging of the just authority in the person of the King our Sovereign Lord, upon demission of the crown in his favour by the Queen his mother, and during his minority in the person of my Lord Regent, also by her appointment; the reunion of the minds of the nobility in so far as any diversity of judgment has appeared in their actions the time of the late controversies; the taking order for the cruel murder perpetrated in the person

of the King, our Sovereign Lord's father of good memory, besides many other disorders standing in the public state very worthy to be redressed by the grave judgment of you my Lords, and others here assembled, which I pass over in silence, as unwilling to weary you with an unnecessary recital of the points which more properly will be brought before the Lords of Articles. These I have but touched,—chopping at them, without any further overture, leaving more ample discourse upon every head to the opening thereof in its just time and place. Two points I may not omit, both tending to your great comfort, if with thankful hearts you will embrace God's benefits so liberally offered unto you. The first is your duty to examine what great success in a short time has followed upon a small beginning concerning matters of religion, and therewithal to consider God's providence towards you, whose care of your preservation in this behalf has not only been extended towards the safety of your consciences, although that is the principal and chief benefit, but also to the security of your lives and lands, wherein as he has wrought miraculously and far beyond your expectation, so has he exceeded the ordinary and common course of the furth-setting of his glory by the hands of the nations round about you. The quietness that you presently



enjoy declares sufficiently the victory that God by his word has obtained amongst you within the space of less than eight or nine years. How feeble the foundation was in the eyes of men, how unlikely it was to rise so soon to such a greatness, with what calmness the work has proceeded, not one of you is ignorant. Iron has not been heard within the house of the Lord, that is to say, the whole is builded, set up, and erected without bloodshed. Note it, I pray you, as a singular testimony of God's favour, and a peculiar benefit granted only to the realm of Scotland, that the true religion has obtained a free course universally through the whole realm, and yet not a Scotchman's blood shed! With what nation on the earth has God dealt so mercifully? Consider the progress of religion from time to time in other countries—Germany, Denmark, England, France, Flanders, or where you please, you shall find the lives of many thousands spent before they could purchase the least part of that liberty, whereunto we have attained, as it were, sleeping upon down coddess [pillows]. As God's mercies in this behalf has been more plentifully poured out upon you than others, when you deserved nothing less, so if you be found negligent to put the talent to profit whereof he has put you in trust (specially when you have the time and fair



occasion offered), it is to be feared that by the dreadful plagues that shall come upon you, he shall teach others not to abuse the time of his merciful visitation. This I say not that I despair of your zeal to go forward in the work you have begun, but to admonish you of your duty. Next to encourage you (which is the second head I had to touch) by reason of the fit instrument you have to forthset the godly ordinances you shall agree upon, as well in matters of religion as touching the Commonwealth, I mean my Lord Regent, whose behaviour being so well known to you all by the experience you have had of him from the beginning even to this hour, will make me to speak of him the more moderately, especially in his presence. This only will I dare promise in his name, that he will never take upon him to raise himself above the law, but on the contrary, will submit his own person to the law, according to such ordinances as you may agree upon, without respect to his own private commodity.”<sup>1</sup>

One curious feature of this speech may be noticed;—while the tribute to the Regent is comparatively cold and formal, Mary’s mild government is warmly approved. “The true religion has obtained a free course universally throughout

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<sup>1</sup> State Papers, Scotland (Eliz.), vol. xiv. No. 95.

the realm, and yet not one Scotsman's blood has been shed!" Otherwise it is Moray who speaks—Moray who, yielding to the importunities of Knox, had resolved that there should be no more "mildness," and that the "crime" of heresy should be punished with death.

But though an official show of friendliness was preserved, there can be no doubt that, even prior to Mary's escape, the alienation between Maitland and Moray had been constantly growing. Maitland believed that the Regent had behaved badly to his sister; he had broken his promise to deal gently with her, and his continued and unlooked-for severity had displeased the nobles. The Regent, who professed "to direct all his ways immediately by the word of God," was shocked, or affected to be shocked, by Maitland's easy morality. The Secretary might be a master of "worldly policy"; but the carnal mind was enmity against God; and the unsanctified gifts of a secular statesman were not appreciated by the pious pensionaries of Elizabeth. So Moray, as far as possible, dispensed with his services, and it soon became notorious that they had ceased to be friends. This was Moray's explanation; but Melville assures us that the Regent was to blame. Moray was surrounded by parasites. They were men of little character and inferior abilities, who, without regard to the

public interest, sought their own advancement. Lethington, on the other hand, was naturally unselfish, and had devoted himself with absolute devotion to the common good. And "his wit so far excelled theirs"—he adds—that whenever they found the chance they did him an ill turn. Yet Maitland's influence was so powerful, and his experience so wide, that the machinery of government would have come to a stop had he been driven from office. So Moray was meanwhile forced to hide his dislike to a statesman whose commanding position was everywhere recognised. "The necessary evil" was the nickname that the Regent gave him, and by which he was known among the Regent's creatures.

Moray's authority was being slowly but surely undermined, when, "on the second day of May, upon a Sunday at even," Mary escaped from Lochleven.

It is improbable that Lethington was concerned in this premature adventure. But had Mary reached Dumbarton in safety, he would certainly have exerted himself to bring about an accord between her and her subjects. It was rumoured, indeed, that even on the morning of Langside, Mary, "to save blood, was ready, upon the Laird of Lethington's motion, to temporise, and come to some composition." Her message, however, intrusted to a Hamilton, did

not reach Maitland, who, concluding that she had no mind to hasten a pacification, was forced to witness a disaster, which, had he received her letter in time, might possibly have been averted.<sup>1</sup>

The escape of Mary to England, however, changed the whole aspect of affairs. She was no longer a close prisoner. The calumnies from which she had suffered, if they were calumnies, would no longer be permitted to pass unchallenged. She could make her voice heard. The story of her wrongs would ring through Christendom. Elizabeth had posed as the friend of the captive Queen, and now that the captive was free, what was Elizabeth to do? The English Queen was not over scrupulous; but after her passionate protestations of friendship she was bound either to aid Mary or to let her go. She did neither. As the cat plays with the mouse which she has caught before she puts it to death, so Elizabeth played with Mary.

What she did was this. She offered to act as umpire, with the view of bringing about a friendly understanding between the Queen of Scots and her rebellious subjects. A charge of political misgovernment would be tabled *pro forma*

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<sup>1</sup> Cott. MS., Cal. B. iv. 1066, | to the same effect.—Memoirs,  
quoted by Father Stevenson.— | p. 91.  
Nau, p. cxcix. Melville writes |



by Moray; and she would then decide that he had failed to substantiate his case. No charge affecting Mary's personal honour would be admitted. This was what she told Mary. Moray, on the other hand, was assured that any evidence in his possession showing that Mary was the accomplice of Bothwell in the murder of Darnley, would be received and considered; and he was urgently pressed to produce it. The bad faith of Elizabeth admits of no defence.

Encouraged by these secret assurances, Moray went to the Conference. He brought with him a packet of letters and poems which had been found (so it was said) in a silver box belonging to Mary, and which he alleged were written by her. These were the documents which have since been known as the Casket Letters.

Of these papers I shall speak more fully in a subsequent chapter. Here it need only be said that the production of some such writings was essential to Moray's defence. A word of explanation will make this clear.

The Lords, with Moray at their head, were at the bar of the public opinion of Europe. They had dethroned their Sovereign; they had kept her in prison; they had threatened her with death. What apology could they offer? Unless Mary could be discredited and dishonoured, they were without excuse. The plea that Mary was

removed for reasons of public policy—because her government had been oppressive or corrupt—was, in view of the unprecedented tranquillity that under the Lethington administration had existed in Scotland since her return in 1561, transparently futile. They might say that Mary knew that Darnley was to be murdered. Mary could retort that they themselves were the murderers,—an allegation “hardly to be denied,” as the shrewd Sussex phrased it. They could say that she had married Bothwell. Mary could reply that she had yielded an unwilling consent to their urgent solicitations. These pleas, it was obvious, would not serve their purpose; we know, indeed, that when they were offered at York, Elizabeth told them roundly that they were trifling with her. It was necessary that fresh ground should be broken; that a graver charge should be formulated, and (if possible) substantiated. A graver charge was formulated. Darnley, they declared, was killed, not because he had made himself obnoxious to the nobility, not because he was the occasion of unkindness with England, but because Mary who had been Bothwell’s mistress had resolved to become Bothwell’s wife. The Lords had felt all along that their original defence was intrinsically weak, and they had taken care to prepare for its probable failure by more or less obscurely intimating that

they had another in reserve. A sentence was introduced into an Act of the Estates, whether with or without the consent of the majority of the members is still matter of debate,<sup>1</sup> which declared that "by divers her privie letters written halelie with her ain hand," she was privy art and part to the murder of her husband. Mary was taken in June; the Act was passed in December; and so far as I am aware this was the first public intimation of the contemplated change of front. The letters were not produced to the Parliament, and until Mary escaped from Lochleven we hear no more of them. They remained for another year in the custody of the precise and scrupulous Morton. It will thus be seen that, except for the alleged incriminating admissions under Mary's own hand, the charge must have collapsed. There was no other evidence of any validity to show that Mary had "art or part" in Bothwell's evil deed.

What view was taken by Maitland of the proceedings at York and Westminster? Did he approve of the Conference? Did he hold that Moray was acting honestly and honourably? Did he believe that the letters were written by Mary, and sent by her to Bothwell? These

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<sup>1</sup> See the Protestation of the Lords at Dumbarton, September 1568. (Goodall, ii. 354.)



questions have been often put; they do not—some of them at least do not—admit of a conclusive answer; but it can at least be said with some confidence, that had Maitland entertained the strongest conviction that the charges against Mary had been trumped up by an unscrupulous faction, he would not have acted otherwise than he did.

Maitland, who had lost all confidence in Elizabeth's rectitude, appears from the first to have regarded the proposed Conference with marked disfavour. He went to York very unwillingly; but Moray, who was afraid to leave him in Scotland, forced him to accompany the Commissioners. "Moray took him to York," Mackenzie says, "rather out of fear than any love he had for him, knowing that the bent of his inclination was for the Queen, and that no man was more capable of serving her friends in his absence than Maitland was."<sup>1</sup> The contemporary historians write to the same effect. Buchanan, Melville, and Spottiswoode are agreed that Lethington, who secretly favoured the Queen, was in favour of "mildness." "The Secretary had long withstood the sending of any Commissioners to England, and simply refused to go on that journey; yet the Regent, not holding it safe

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<sup>1</sup> *Writers of the Scottish Nation* (1722), iii. 227.

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to leave him at home, did insist so with him as in the end he consented.”<sup>1</sup>

Though Maitland went to York, it may be said quite truly that he, who was commonly the spokesman of his countrymen, took no part in the proceedings. He was opposed, we are told, to “odious accusations,” and he held himself aloof from the farce that was being played. Once only did he come to the front,—when Cecil’s favourite plea of an English suzerainty was put forward by the English Commissioners, Maitland indignantly or sarcastically protested. “The first day of meeting, the Duke of Norfolk required that the Regent should make homage in the king’s name to the Crown of England. Whereat the Regent grew red, and knew not what to answer; but Secretary Lidington took up the speech, and said that when the lands of Huntingdon, Cumberland, and Northumberland, with such other lands as Scotland did of old possess in England, were restored to Scotland, homage would gladly be made for the said lands; but as to the Crown and Kingdom of Scotland, it was freer than England had been lately when it paid St Peter’s pence to the Pope.”<sup>2</sup>

Buchanan frankly admits that the Regent accused his sister to excuse himself. Moray,

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<sup>1</sup> Spottiswoode, ii. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Melville, 94.

indeed, had offered precisely the same plea to Mary when she reproached him at Lochleven with the injurious language introduced into the Act of the Estates of December 1567. "He answered, That he and the rest of the nobility could do no less for their own surety."<sup>1</sup> But although they had publicly asserted in the Act of 1567 that in so far as "by divers her privie letters written hailie with her ain hand, and sent by her to James, Earl Bothwell," it was most certain that she was privy to the murder of the king; although what purported to be copies of the letters had been submitted by Moray to Elizabeth before the opening of the conference; although the letters themselves had been secretly exhibited to the English Commissioners at York; Moray hesitated, or affected to hesitate. His sister's honour was dear to him. He had done enough. Why should his finer feelings be wounded? But Elizabeth was obstinate. She did not appreciate his sensitive scruples. The letters must be produced. She had seen them in June, and she had somewhat too freely expressed her opinion that they were forgeries.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Drury to Cecil, 3d April 1568 (Cotton).

<sup>2</sup> Jules Gautier's *Histoire de Marie Stuart* (1809) in Scheirn., p. 413. The words were spoken in the presence of the Spanish

ambassador. Moray's letter to Middlemore (22d June) proves that copies had been sent to London in June. (Goodall, ii. 75.)

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But if the Lords could once be induced to lay them before the assembled peers at Westminster or Hampton Court, the breach between them and their mistress would be irreparable. Melville's graphic account of the farcical scene, when Moray swearing he would ne'er consent consented, is known to be substantially accurate. "Then Secretary Cecil asked if they had the accusation there? Yes, says Mr John Wood; and with that he plucks it out of his bosom; but I will not deliver it, says he, till her Majesty's handwriting and seal be delivered to my Lord Regent for what he demands. Then the Bishop of Orkney snatcheth the writing out of his hand. Let me have it, says he; I shall present it. Mr John Wood ran after him, as if he would have taken it again. Forward goes the Bishop to the council-table, and gives in the accusation. Then cries out the Chamberlain of England, Well done, Bishop, thou art the frankest fellow among them all. Only Mr Henry Balneaves had made resistance, and called for Secretary Lidington, who waited without the council-house. So soon as Balneaves had called for him he came in, and whispered in the Regent's ear, that he had shamed himself, and lost his reputation for ever."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Melville Memoirs, p. 97.

Elizabeth did not believe that the writings were genuine; did Maitland? It might possibly be enough to reply that at the very moment when the letters were being submitted to the Commissioners, a treaty of marriage between Mary and Norfolk was being negotiated by him. We have seen that in 1565 he had favoured the Duke. The premier peer of England was a worthy suitor for Mary's hand. Spite of all that had occurred in the interval, his opinion had not changed; and whenever he arrived at York the proposal was renewed. The serious business of the day was transacted "in the fields" after the Commissioners had adjourned their sittings. The details of the negotiations at York were not accurately known till a later period,—not, indeed, until Moray had betrayed the Duke; but it is clear, if the depositions of the witnesses in the Norfolk trial are credible, that Maitland regarded the darker accusations against Mary, and the evidence on which they proceeded, with contemptuous incredulity. He had been behind the scenes; he had examined the fragments of manuscript which the industrious animosity of Morton's hirelings had pieced together; and his belief in Mary's innocence had not been shaken.

John Leslie, Bishop of Ross—a man whose zeal was untempered by discretion, and whose

judgment was often at fault—was acting for the Scottish Queen; Norfolk was the chairman of the Commissioners appointed by Elizabeth to try the cause; Maitland, though he secretly favoured Mary, was in the company of the Regent. None of these men, it is plain, had any confidence in Elizabeth's good faith; it is just as plain, on the other hand, that they were confident that Mary had been unfairly accused. One of the charges against Norfolk was that he had disclosed to Lethington the instructions he had received from Elizabeth for the conduct of the inquiry. A curious piece of evidence was produced by the prosecution. A letter had been addressed by Leslie to Mary on the 3d of November, containing an account of the interview between Maitland and the Duke. The letter, or the draft of the letter, was lost by the Bishop (the Bishop had a knack of losing his papers), "and by good hap found by the Regent." Moray sent it to Cecil, and it was produced at Norfolk's trial. "Please your Majesty"—it ran—"I conferred at great length with the Lord of Lethington a great part of the night, who assured me that he had reasoned with Norfolk this Saturday in the fields, who determined to him that *it was the Queen's fixed purpose not to end your cause at this time, but to hold the same in suspense, and do that was in her power to cause us to*

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*persew extremely, to the effect that the Regent and his adherents might utter all they could to your dishonour; to the effect, as was supposed, to cause you to come into disdain with the whole subjects of your realm, that you may be the more unable to attempt anything to her disadvantage; and to this effect is all her intention, that when they have produced all they can against you, the Queen will not appoint the matter instantly, but transport you up into the country.”*<sup>1</sup> No attempt was made to show that Norfolk had misunderstood or misrepresented Elizabeth; the charge against him was that he had disclosed what it was his duty to hide,—“disclosed to Lidington the Queen’s intention to be in certain points in disfavour of the Scottish Queen.”<sup>2</sup> The line taken by Maitland is described in almost identical words by Norfolk and Leslie. The Bishop, when examined in the Tower on 6th November, frankly admitted that Mary had been led to believe that the Conference at York was simply meant to bring about an accord, and that this was the reason why Norfolk had been appointed. “In the meantime, before our passing to York, Robert Melville came to Bolton with letters sent by Lethington from Fast Castle to the Queen my mis-

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<sup>1</sup> Murdin, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Haynes, p. 573.



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truss, to advertise her that the Earl of Moray was wholly bent to utter all that he could against her, and to that effect had carried with him all the letters which he had to produce against her for proof of the murder, whereof he had recovered the copy, and had caused his wife write them, which he sent to the Queen; and that he would not have come into England in the Earl of Moray's company unless it had been to do her service, and to travel for mitigation of the rigours intended. At Lethington's lodgings at York we talked almost the whole night. He told me that he had advised Norfolk to counsel the Earl of Moray and others to abstain from uttering any dishonest matter against the Queen; but to grow to some composition among themselves. The Duke spake nothing particularly of the marriage, but referred all to Lethington."<sup>1</sup> Norfolk, for his part, did not deny that he had conferred with Lethington. "It is also to be noted," he explained in his confession, "that although Lethington came in company of the Regent, he was not unsuspected of the Regent;" and in his answer to the articles of impeachment, he declared that Lethington told him at York that he came there not against the Queen of Scots, but on her part, — giving him to

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<sup>1</sup> Murdin, p. 52.

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understand that "*the Queen of Scots was not guilty.*"<sup>1</sup>

I propose in the next chapter to consider, in connection with the Casket Letters, the value of the evidence against Mary produced at the Conference; now I am only concerned to show that the impression which that evidence had produced upon the mind of an unusually astute and well-informed observer was by no means favourable to the authenticity of the incriminating writings.

Lethington's record, it may be argued, is not clean, and the declaration of his belief in Mary's innocence proves little. But there is one fact which those who distrust Maitland most must admit to be of immense significance. For it was immediately after the production of the Casket Letters that the noblest man in Scotland—"the mirror of chivalry"—went over to Mary Stuart. Had he believed the letters to be genuine, would Kirkaldy of Grange have deserted the Regent? He left Moray because Moray had lent himself to a fraud. The Casket Letters were published to make Mary impossible. They did not make her impossible; in point of fact they consolidated her party. She was in better case after their publication than she had been before,—Grange being only one of many who then

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<sup>1</sup> Duke of Norfolk's Answers, 3d November 1571 (Murdin).

changed sides. The strong reaction that set in was due, I believe, to the conviction that the Queen had been infamously maligned.

The relations between Maitland and Moray were not improved by the incidents of the Conference, and, as time passed, they became more and more strained. Maitland indeed had been guilty of one fatal imprudence,—relying upon the Regent's honour, he had tried to interest him in the Norfolk marriage. Moray behaved with characteristic duplicity; so long as he remained in England he led Norfolk to understand that the proposal was cordially approved by him; whenever he was safely across the Border, with Elizabeth's £5000 in his pocket, he did his best to thwart it. It was necessary that the Scottish courts should declare that the marriage with Bothwell was invalid, or that the Scottish Parliament should consent to a divorce. Without some such declaration of nullity the negotiations with Norfolk could not be concluded. A few months previously the Lords had been eager for a divorce, to which, as they then declared, the infatuated Queen would not consent; now, instigated by Moray, they obstinately opposed it. "Lethington," we are told, "raged, but prevailed not."<sup>1</sup> The Convention was dissolved;

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, ii. 490.

Maitland after a parting speech, in which he sarcastically congratulated the Lords on their new-born zeal for Bothwell's domestic happiness, went away with Athol, putting a mountain-pass between himself and the Regent; and the breach between them was complete.

It had been arranged that whenever the divorce was granted, Maitland should see Elizabeth, and obtain her consent to the marriage. The match had been approved by Sussex and Throckmorton as well as by Maitland and Moray. Many of the more moderate men in either realm had come to see that while the best part of the people of Scotland adhered with passionate loyalty to their captive Queen, there could be no real peace until she was restored; and Lethington held that the Norfolk marriage would "end all troubles."<sup>1</sup> A scheme which might have saved the wretched country from years of anarchy was wrecked by Moray's treachery. Maitland was kept at home; and Elizabeth, hearing of the scheme from some vindictive gossip, was mortally hurt. Cecil wrote that she was as much offended with the manner of the compassing of the marriage as with the marriage itself;<sup>2</sup> Norfolk was sent to the Tower; and Drury was despatched to bring Moray and Maitland to

<sup>1</sup> Hatfield Calendar, 434.

<sup>2</sup> Cecil to Drury, 9th Sept.



book. The Regent was abjectly submissive. Without a scruple he disclosed all that he knew. Sheltering himself meanly behind Lethington and the Duke, he sent Cecil the private and confidential letters he had received from Norfolk. Maitland, on the other hand (Maitland like Mary was always magnanimous), treated Elizabeth's petulant anger with scorn. When Moray urged him to accuse the Duke, he told him distinctly that nothing would induce him to betray the man who had trusted to his honour.<sup>1</sup> Afterwards, at the instance of Elizabeth, the solicitations were renewed; but Maitland was obdurate. He assured the Regent, with admirable gravity, that "there *never* was any mention of the said marriage between the Duke and him, neither by privy conference nor by letters."<sup>2</sup> Maitland's loyalty, however, did not save Norfolk. The evidence furnished by the Regent was used with fatal effect at the trial; and there can be little doubt that the double-dealing of Moray brought Norfolk to the block.

About the same time another great English noble—the fugitive Northumberland—in defiance of the laws of Border hospitality, was arrested by Moray and lodged in Lochleven. He was kept

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<sup>1</sup> Moray to Cecil, 9th Oct. 1569.

<sup>2</sup> Moray to Cecil, 7th Nov. 1569.

there—in Mary’s prison—until the price put upon his head by Morton, the forty pieces of silver, had been paid by the English Government; and then he was handed over to Elizabeth to die, as Moray truly phrased it, the death of a traitor. The Borderers were furious, and Scotsmen of every faction were shamed by a deed which hurt the national honour. “All Tevydale hates the Regent,” Hunsdon declared emphatically, and the feeling was not confined to Teviotdale.

The general exasperation was increased when it was rumoured that Moray was engaged in what was regarded as a shameful traffic with Elizabeth. He was ready, it appeared, to barter Northumberland for Mary. Knox had consistently advised his friends in the Council to put Mary to death; and he had quite lately addressed a pastoral to the Church, in which he had declared that “if she had suffered, according as God’s law commandeth murderers and adulterers to dee the death, the wickedness taken out of Israel, the plague should have ceased.”<sup>1</sup> Now—on the 2d of January 1570—the Reformer, with his one foot in the grave, wrote to Cecil urging him to “strike at the root.” Cecil, when consulting upon the matter of weight that was about to be opened to him, was to turn his eyes

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, ii. 482.

unto God and forget himself and his.<sup>1</sup> What was the "matter of weight"? The "consultation" to which Knox alluded was undoubtedly that which Cecil was about to hold with Nicolas Elphinston. Elphinston had been despatched from Edinburgh by Moray, on the day that Knox's letter was written, to open a secret negotiation with the English Secretary. A manuscript note of Moray's proposals—in Cecil's handwriting—has been preserved. The Regent had been urged by Elizabeth to deliver up Northumberland. It was a hard request. He would incur the hatred of his countrymen if he surrendered a banished man to be slain; but he was ready to consent if, in exchange for Northumberland, his sister the Queen of Scots (with an immediate advance of money and a present of arms and ammunition) were given into his hands.<sup>2</sup> No one at the English Court affected to doubt what the proposed exchange of prisoners really implied. Were Mary once in Morton's hands (and Morton had become Moray's "second self"), she would have short shrift.

The shameful bargain was never completed. Moray's agent was still at Westminster when Moray was shot by Bothwellhaugh.

<sup>1</sup> Knox to Cecil, 2d January 1570. National MSS. of England, iii. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Note of Instructions to Elphinston, 19th January 1570.



A few weeks before the apprehension of Northumberland the differences between the Regent and Maitland had come to a head. Maitland on the rising of Parliament had betaken himself, as we have seen, to the Athol country, where Moray's writs did not run. There had been rumours for some time that his life was in danger; and he had thought it prudent to withdraw from the Court.<sup>1</sup> Moray felt that the moment had arrived when decisive action was necessary, and he was persuaded by Morton to strike the first blow. Maitland was decoyed to Stirling. "The Earls of Athol and Crawford were coming to the Convention, and by the way happened to be hunting about Dunblane; and Secretary Lethington being in their company, the Regent suspected that they were practising somewhat for the Queen's return, which he dreaded. When the Lords were all convenit in the Council House, there was a gentleman callit Thomas Crawford, servant to the Earl of Lennox, introduced, and he, in presence of the Regent and the Lords, accusit Secretary Lethington of the king's murder. The Secretary presently offered to find caution to be answerable to the laws for that crime, how soon he should be required thereto. Crawford replied that because he was accusit of treason, he should

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<sup>1</sup> Hunsdon to Cecil, 5th August 1569.

not be permitted to find caution, but should be compelled to remain in prison till he should be tried, either clean or guilty; and the Lords voted that he should be imprisoned. The Earl of Athol was hereat heavily commovit, and departit from Stirling immediately. This accusation was devisit by the Regent and the Earl of Morton."<sup>1</sup>

Maitland was immediately sent under escort to Edinburgh, where he was lodged in a house belonging to David Forrester,<sup>2</sup> in the immediate vicinity of the castle. Grange was in command of the castle; but recent events had shaken his fidelity to the Regent. The admiration which he had felt for Moray had been transferred to Maitland. Maitland had fascinated Kirkaldy as he had fascinated Elizabeth. News came to the castle that the Secretary was to be hardly dealt with; his jailers were about to remove him to Tantallon, where he would be at Morton's mercy. Kirkaldy did not hesitate; he came down at nightfall to the town with a company of soldiers, surrounded the house where Maitland lay, took him from his keepers, and conveyed him to the castle,—which was from that time forward the headquarters of Mary's faction in Scotland. The

<sup>1</sup> *Historie of King James the Sext*, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 149.

defection of Grange hurt Moray keenly. It was the hardest blow that had yet been dealt him. "I know that the taking of Lidington to the castle sunk deepest into the Regent's heart."<sup>1</sup>

Moray was probably ill advised when he attacked Maitland. The quarrel deepened the distrust with which the Government had come to be regarded since Morton's ascendancy in its counsels had been recognised. "Upon the apprehension of Lidington arose great speeches in Scotland of mischief that would follow."<sup>2</sup> So strong was the feeling, that Maitland was able to assure Mary a few days later that all Scotland was in her favour.<sup>3</sup> The great English nobles, on their side, were scandalised by what they held to be a crowning act of treachery. "It can be seen by Moray's dealing with Lethington what mark he shoots at. He that hath been so bold with his own mistress as to bereave her of her kingdom and liberty, hath forgotten all former friendship. He hath a new mark in his eye, no less than a kingdom. God send him such luck as others have had that followed the same course."<sup>4</sup> Of all his old friends, Maitland

<sup>1</sup> Melville, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Hunsdon to Cecil, 18th September 1569. Hatfield Calendar, p. 419.

<sup>3</sup> Maitland to Mary, 20th

September 1569.

<sup>4</sup> Norfolk to Cecil, 15th September 1569. Hatfield Calendar, p. 419.

alone had a good word for the Regent. "All public men," he told Cecil, "are subject to the malice of the world. The Regent hath yielded more to my enemies than he would of his own nature."<sup>1</sup>

A "day of law," as it was called, was appointed for the Laird of Lethington; but when it came Moray did not venture to accuse him. The capital was crowded with Lowland and Border nobles,—all willing and eager, after the curious fashion of the age, to prove Maitland's innocence with their swords. Maitland was fast becoming, as Robertson says, "the soul of his party"; and the assembly that day in the streets of Edinburgh was the earliest intimation of the immense influence he had acquired. Moray bent to the storm. He was well acquainted with the custom of the country; he had availed himself of it on more than one occasion; but he now professed to be scandalised by this unprecedented defiance of the sovereign authority. The Lords had assembled to overawe the officers of the law, and the trial would be postponed to a more suitable day. Moray rode off with Morton, and Maitland went back to the castle. They did not meet again.

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 23d October 1569. Kirkaldy had the strongest belief in Maitland's integrity: the issue, he confi-

dently assured Bedford, "will be to his honour and innocence" (October 23).

It is impossible to doubt that during the last month of the year 1569—during the last month, that is to say, of Moray's life—a political crisis was imminent. The Regent was tottering to his fall. His unpopularity was unbounded. He had hurt the pride of the nation, and the nation was not disposed to forgive him. The storm was ready to burst, when, on 24th January 1570, he was shot at Linlithgow. If it be true that a blunder is less excusable than a crime, then no excuse can be offered for Bothwellhaugh. Mary's exultation, though very wrong, was very natural; but, in so far as her true interests were involved, the murder of Moray was an immense mistake. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, and the pitiful death of the "Good Regent" gave fresh life to the waning zeal of the Congregation.



## CHAPTER TWO.

### THE CASKET LETTERS.

IT was implicitly admitted at the time by Elizabeth and her Ministers that unless the Casket Letters were genuine, the graver charges against Mary, as the accomplice of Bothwell, could not be sustained. Apart from the Casket Letters, there was really no evidence that Mary was guilty in any other sense than every member of the Privy Council who had been present at Craigmillar was guilty; and the authenticity of the contents of the silver box has therefore come to be a question of vital importance. Those who incline to hold that Mary was guilty of adultery and murder must be convinced that the genuineness of the Casket Letters has been established, and established just as the genuineness of an ancient manuscript, or the rare copy of a famous edition, is established. It is a bibliographical question, to be determined as other bibliographical questions are determined. The internal evidence furnished by the letters them-

selves is not, of course, in such an inquiry, to be entirely disregarded; but the external evidence—the true history of the casket and its contents as affecting the statements made by those who produced it for a specific purpose—is that which is virtually decisive.<sup>1</sup>

The inquiry is undertaken to enable the historian to answer these questions;—Is it proved that the letters were written by Mary; that they were addressed to Bothwell; and that they were (either when discovered or at any previous time) in his possession? The Lords alleged that all these questions could be answered in the affirmative; the letters were Mary's letters, were addressed to Bothwell, and were recovered from him.

Such a general averment was of course insufficient; more specification was needed; and towards the close of the year 1568 a detailed and circumstantial narrative was furnished by Morton. The incriminating letters, he declared on his honour, were found in a casket which had been left in the custody of the Governor of Edinburgh Castle, Sir James Balfour, by Bothwell. Bothwell sent a servant, George Dalglish, to receive them from Balfour; and Dalglish, while return-

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<sup>1</sup> I have treated the question of the Casket Letters in 'The Impeachment of Mary Stuart' (originally published in 1870—republished in 1876 and 1883) more fully than it is possible or expedient to do in this volume: and to that paper, as well as to Mr Hosack's admirable treatise, I must refer the reader.



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ing through Edinburgh on 20th June 1567, was captured by Morton's retainers with the casket and letters in his possession. That was the substance of Morton's story.

The casket was taken from one of Bothwell's servants, and it contained letters written by the Queen. It is because they were taken from Dalglish that it is concluded, and reasonably concluded, that they had been in Bothwell's possession.

Were they taken from Dalglish?

Dalglish was captured on 20th June 1567; and, so far as I know, the allegation that the casket was found on Dalglish was not made until 16th September 1568—that is to say, *after an interval of fifteen months*.<sup>1</sup> On that day, at a meeting of the Privy Council, the casket was given over by Morton to Moray, and in the register of the Council, after the contents of the "silver box overgilt with gold" have been specified, it is added,—“which box and whole pieces within the same were taken and found with umquhile George Dalglish, servant to the said Earl Bothwell, upon the xx day of June, the year of God 1567 years.” Until 16th September 1568 Dalglish's name does not appear in connection

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<sup>1</sup> Mr Froude assumes (ix. 199) that this declaration was made in 1567; in point of fact it was not made until the Re-

gent was leaving Edinburgh to attend the Conference at York.

with the finding of the casket; other names were in the meantime mentioned; in a manuscript, for instance, to which Calderwood had access, Bothwell's messenger is said to have been a Hepburn. "I find in a certain manuscript that the messenger was Mr Thomas Hepburn, parson of Aldhamstock."<sup>1</sup>

What did Dalglish say? Before 16th September 1568 Dalglish had been executed as an accomplice in the murder of Darnley. He was therefore out of the way, and could not be interrogated. His examination, however, had been taken before his execution, and we might reasonably have expected that the circumstances attending the finding of the casket would have been referred to in the deposition. But—strange to say—there is no word in the deposition regarding the casket; no question was put to him with reference to a momentous incident of which he was, if not the sole, at least the most competent, witness,—a momentous incident, for at the time when he was executed, the Lords had elected to use the alleged contents of the casket in their defence,—having solemnly declared, in the Act of Parliament of December 1567, that by Mary's letters to Bothwell it was evident that she was privy to the murder of her husband. A singular

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, ii. 367.

omission!—an unaccountable blunder!—incapable, indeed, of rational explanation except on one hypothesis, the hypothesis that Morton was lying. The Lords *must* have known how invaluable such evidence would be. They were prudent plotters, who did nothing rashly. Recalling the precise and technical legal language in which the different “bands” to which they had been parties were drawn, we may say of them, as Charles II. said of certain cautious conspirators of his reign, that “they committed treason by advice of counsel.” Unless the story was invented by Morton, the absence of any allusion to it in Dalglish’s deposition is entirely unaccountable.

It may be added that neither Sir James Balfour, nor any of those present when Dalglish was apprehended, were examined. Balfour should have been brought to prove that he had received the casket from Bothwell, and that he gave it to Dalglish; and some of Morton’s retainers to prove that they took it from the man to whom Balfour gave it.

It is obvious, therefore, that grave suspicion attaches to Morton’s story. Morton was quite unscrupulous; and it might be said with perfect justice (in the sense that he observed neither) that his word was as good as his bond. The chance is that he was lying. If a judicial inquiry had been ordered, and letters purporting to be

written by the Queen had been found by an officer of the law in Bothwell's repositories, the presumption of their genuineness would have been strong. But, in the circumstances, it is folly to contend that the casket with its contents was traced into Bothwell's hands.

The argument, of course, is not conclusive. Morton may have lied ; yet the letters may have been written by Mary. We have now to inquire, therefore, whether any evidence leading to a rational belief in the authenticity of the documents they produced, was submitted by the Lords ; or whether, on the other hand, the whole circumstances do not more or less clearly indicate that a fraud was committed.

There can be no reasonable doubt—let me say here in passing—that the fraud, if fraud there was, was contrived by Morton, whose name constantly occurs in connection with the letters. It was Morton's men who apprehended Dalglish ; it was Morton who for more than a year had the "handling" of the letters ; it was Morton who gave them to the Regent when the Commissioners were leaving for York. Morton—one of the mercenaries of the Reformation, who, like others of his trade, combined craft with ferocity—had plenty of clever scamps in his pay—dissolute lawyers, unfrocked priests—who, out of the mass of Mary's manuscripts which were found at



Holyrood, could have manufactured with facility a score of letters to a lover. The crime of forgery was at that time in Scotland one of the most common (a state of matters possibly explained by the fact that while the bulk of the community were illiterate, a small minority of clerks and lawyers were highly accomplished), and the forger who undertook to imitate the "Italian" handwriting of Mary, when introducing a compromising paragraph into an innocent letter, had an easy task.<sup>1</sup>

1. The earliest allusions to Mary's incriminating letters is to be found in a letter written by Throckmorton on 25th July—six weeks after Carberry. If the Lords—he wrote—cannot by "fair means" rid themselves of their Queen, they mean to charge her with the crimes of Tyranny, Incontinency, and Murder—the murder of her husband,—“whereof they say,” he continues, “they have as apparent proof against her as may be, as well by the testimony of her own handwriting, which they have recovered, as also by sufficient witnesses.” Throckmorton was not permitted to see the “handwriting”; the letters were not shown to him; and his descrip-

<sup>1</sup> One of the most elaborate forgeries of the age was the 'Confession of the True Christian Faith,' issued in 1581, and

which professed to be signed by the Archbishops of St Andrews and Glasgow, and the Bishop of Aberdeen. Calderwood, iii. 54.

tion is certainly as loose and vague as it could well be. Whether the *threats* then used by the Lords were seriously intended, we do not know. Of the charge of incontinency (except with Bothwell) we hear no more; and the charge of tyranny, in view of Mary's just and gentle government, was ludicrously wide of the mark.

2. Moray, who was at the time in London or Paris, received about the end of July from a correspondent in Scotland what purported to be an abstract or summary of the most important of the incriminating letters. According to his correspondent, the letter stated that the writer proposed *to go and fetch* her husband; to administer poison to him at a house on the road; if the attempt to poison did not succeed, *to have him blown up on the night of the marriage of one of her servants*; and it concluded by entreating her lover, if he did not divorce, at least to poison his wife!<sup>1</sup> It need hardly be said that this account does not correspond in any particular with the letter ultimately produced. If a letter in these terms ever existed, it was judiciously suppressed,—judiciously, for it would have been difficult to convince any sharp-witted critic that so circumstantial an *anticipation* of the circumstances attending Darnley's murder at Kirk-

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<sup>1</sup> Froude, ix. 119.

o'-Field had been, or could have been, written *before* it occurred.<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted, moreover, that Moray had been assured by his correspondent that the letter addressed by Mary to Bothwell "was signed with her name." In point of fact, none of the letters afterwards produced was either signed or addressed.

3. About the end of November 1567 Drury was informed that at a meeting of the Lords who had been present at Craigmillar, it was agreed that the bond for the removal of Darnley, which had been signed by them in December 1566, and which had been placed by Bothwell for better security in the silver casket, should be "turned into ashes." "The writing which did comprehend the names and consents of the chiefs for the murdering of the King is turned to ashes; the same that concerns the Queen's part kept to be shown."<sup>2</sup> It may be presumed that this discreet arrangement was sanctioned by Moray out of regard for his sister,—Moray's tender regard for his sister's honour being the plea invariably put forward for any act of pecu-

<sup>1</sup> The Kirk-of-Field was, at the last moment, selected at Darnley's own desire. "It was devised in Glasgow that the King should have lien first at Craigmillar; but because he had no will thereof, the pur-

pose was altered, and conclusion taken that he should lie beside the Kirk-of-Field." Nelson's Deposition, Goodall, ii. 244.

<sup>2</sup> Drury to Cecil, 28th November 1567.



liar baseness.<sup>1</sup> The information Drury had received is otherwise corroborated; and it seems indeed by no means improbable that Bothwell, who was keenly interested in its preservation, should have placed the Bond in the casket, and the casket in the castle. Morton declared, of course, that the contents of the casket had not been tampered with; but if Drury's information was correct—if when it came into Morton's hands it contained not the letters but the Bond, if when it left them it contained not the Bond but the letters—Morton lied. What was taken from the casket, what was placed in the casket, by Morton, only Morton could tell; and Morton could keep his own counsel better than most men.

4. At a meeting of the Secret Council of the nobles who had been in league against Bothwell (it does not appear to have been a regular meeting of the Privy Council, as no minute of such a meeting is to be found in the Register), held at Edinburgh on the 4th of December 1567, an Act was passed in which it was declared that *they had taken up arms against the Queen*, because “by divers her privie letters *written and subscrivit with her ain hand*, and sent by her to

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<sup>1</sup> Moray's enemies had no belief in the sincerity of his regard for Mary; it was a pre-  
tence; “*Crocodili lacrymæ!*”  
—Leslie says emphatically.  
Goodall, ii. 290.

James, Earl Bothwell,"<sup>1</sup> it appeared that she was privy to the murder of her husband. The terms of this minute are in many respects open to observation. Up to the day it was written—4th December—the Council had invariably asserted that Mary was Bothwell's *victim*; now for the first time they alleged that she was his *accomplice*; and the evidence on which they professed to proceed was her own letters. But the letters had not merely convinced them of her complicity; it was the discovery of the letters, they add, which induced them to take up arms against her. So that the letters must have been in their possession not later than the month of May,—the rising having occurred in the first week of June. Yet they never alluded to the letters till 4th December; and the reasons assigned for the rising in the earlier minutes of the Council—from June till August—are inconsistent with the view that any such letters had been recovered. They afterwards asserted, as we have seen, that the letters (which had been the occasion of the rising) were not recovered until Dalglish's apprehension on 20th June—three weeks after the rising had proved successful. All these variations are suspicious; but the important words of the Act, as bearing on

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<sup>1</sup> Goodall, ii. 64.

the present inquiry, are those which allege that the letters were not only written but *subscribed* with her own hand by Mary. As the letters ultimately produced, and which came to be known as the Casket Letters, were not signed, it is tolerably certain that the Casket Letters were not laid before the Council. The statement that they were signed corresponds with the account transmitted to Moray; and it is clear that from July to December the persons who "had the handling of the letters" (to use Mr Burton's suggestive words) pretended that they bore Mary's name. Any one accidentally lighting upon such papers would naturally, in the first instance, turn to the signature; and it is obvious, from the emphatic manner in which subscription is insisted on, both in Moray's letter and in the Act of Council, that the Lords clearly recognised the importance that would be attached to it. But when the scraps of paper, on which monstrous confessions of lust and murder had been scribbled either by Mary or by Morton's scribes, were at last reluctantly exhibited in public, it was found that they bore no signature.

5. A few days later the Estates ratified an Act of Indemnity in which the letters are referred to as "written halelie with her ain hand." The accurate and industrious Chalmers was of opin-



ion that the letters were not laid before the Parliament; but it is probable that in accordance with practice some documents were tabled *pro forma* with the Act. We cannot tell whether these documents were the letters ultimately produced at Westminster; for they were neither read nor inventoried nor recorded.<sup>1</sup> We know, however, that the Peers who met at Dumbarton—Argyll, Eglinton, Huntly, Maxwell, Erroll, and a score of others—solemnly declared that the document (or documents) produced along with the Act, was not in the handwriting of the Queen. The Act was hastily passed,—the loyalists in the house, afraid if opposition were offered, that it might endanger her life, allowing it to be read without debate. Too much importance must not be attached to the tactics adopted by the Queen's adherents during her imprisonment,—she was then in the power of ruthless enemies, and it was only by a show of acquiescence, of submission, that her friends succeeded in saving her life. Her jailers, indeed, did not scruple to inform her friends that a successful rising would be the signal for her execution. “And in case the noblemen favourers of her Majesty, had raisit ane army to that

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<sup>1</sup> If any of the Casket Letters were among the documents tabled with the Act, they must have been immediately afterwards returned to Morton.

effect, it was menacit and boasted *that they should send her heid to them.*"<sup>1</sup> The Queen's party had given hostages to fortune, and were bound to walk warily.

6. Up to June 1568 it does not certainly appear that either the letters or copies of the letters had been seen by any one outside the inner circle of Morton's intimates. After Mary's escape from Lochleven, however, it was necessary to take action of some kind; and Moray's Council having had "copies of the letters translated into Scotch," sent them to Elizabeth by John Wood. The letters did not impress Elizabeth,—she told the Spanish ambassador that they were manifest forgeries. One cannot but wonder that Moray, when he was inviting Elizabeth to express an opinion upon their genuineness, should have considered it necessary to translate them into Scots,—French being a language with which the English Queen might be presumed to be familiar. (Indeed, at the memorable interview at Westminster in October 1565, she had told Moray that she understood French better than Scotch.) Whether the copies sent in June were exact translations of the letters afterwards produced we do not know; they were probably returned to Wood, and are not now in existence.

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<sup>1</sup> The instructions agreed on at Dumbarton.—Goodall, ii. 360.

7. On 16th September 1568 the casket was handed over to Moray by Morton, in whose exclusive possession, as we have seen, it had remained up to that date. Dead men tell no tales; Dalglish had been executed on 3d January; and now for the first time we hear that it had been taken from Dalglish on 20th June of the previous year. The receipt granted by Moray "testifies and declares," moreover, that Morton had "truly and honestly observit and keptit the said box, and haile writs and pieces within the same, without ony alteration, augmentation, or diminution thereof, in ony part or portion." Seeing that the casket had been in Morton's custody for nearly fifteen months, it is hard to understand how Moray, untouched by any sense of shame, could have emitted such a declaration. There had been "no alteration, augmentation, or diminution" of the contents; yet, according to Drury, it was notorious that the bond for the murder of Darnley had been abstracted. He who excuses, accuses himself; and Moray's assurance that the box had not been tampered with since it was recovered, is calculated—for how could Moray know?—to intensify the suspicions it was meant to allay.

8. When Mary reached England after the disastrous battle of Langside, Elizabeth proposed that the matters in dispute between her and her



subjects should be referred to a Commission. Mary at once, and Moray after considerable hesitation, agreed to the reference. Mary's instructions to her Commissioners contained the following article: "In case they allege they have any writings of mine which may infer presumptions against me, ye shall desire that the principals be produced, and that I myself may have inspection thereof, and make answer thereto; for ye shall affirm in my name I never wrote anything concerning that matter to any creature; and if any such writings there be, they are false and feigned, forged and invented by themselves to my dishonour and slander; and there are persons in Scotland, both men and women, who can counterfeit my handwriting, and write the like manner of writing which I use as well as myself, and principally such as are in company with themselves." The Commissioners—the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Sussex, and Sir Ralph Sadler—met at York in the beginning of October; and on the 20th were secretly, and in the absence of Mary's representatives, waited upon at their lodgings by the representatives of the Confederate Lords. "In private and secret conference with us, not as Commissioners, as they protested, but for our better instruction," the incriminating documents were for the first time exhibited. "And these men do constantly affirm the said



letters and other writings which they produce of her own hand, to be her own hand indeed." It might be reasonably concluded from these words that the Scottish Commissioners represented that the letters then and there produced were in the handwriting of the Queen, and that Moray and Morton had ventured at last to exhibit the original documents. But it would appear that this was not the case. The extracts which were made and transmitted to London by the English Commissioners were taken from the Scots version, and are identical, word for word, with the corresponding passages in the letters as afterwards printed in Scots. If we accept the language of the Commissioners in its literal sense, we are driven to hold that the first time that the letters were seen by any one except the Lords themselves they were in Scots. Be this as it may, however, the Commissioners cautiously avoided expressing any decided opinion upon the authenticity of the letters. "In a paper here enclosed," they proceed, "we have noted to your Majesty the chief and special points of the said letters, *written, as they say, with her own hand,* to the intent it may please your Majesty to consider of them, and so to judge whether the same be sufficient to convince her of the detestable crime of the murder of her husband, which in our opinion and conscience, *if the said*

*letters be written with her own hand, is very hard to be avoided.*” “If the said letters be written with her own hand,” then, of course, there could be no doubt whatever of her guilt. The Earl of Sussex, after examining the letters, addressed a confidential letter to Cecil, in which the hesitation of the official letter is strongly emphasised. The Lords will not venture, he says, to accuse the Queen of murder on the strength of the letters they had produced, as in that event “she will deny them, and accuse the most of them of manifest consent to the murder, *hardly to be denied*, so as upon the trial on both sides her proofs will judicially fall best out, *as it is thought.*” “And now touching my opinion of the matter,” he continued, “I think surely no end can be made good for England except the person of the Scotch Queen be detained by one means or other in England.” To accomplish this object the Queen must be proved guilty of the murder. But “if this will not fall out sufficiently (*as I doubt it will not*) to determine judicially, if she denies her letters,” another line which he points out, and to which I will advert immediately, would require to be taken.<sup>1</sup> The sagacious and experienced Sussex, it is clear, had formed an extremely unfavourable opinion of the probative

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<sup>1</sup> Sussex to Cecil, 22d October 1568.

value of the documents which the Lords had produced at York.

It is important to notice that the first document furtively exhibited at York purported to be a warrant from Mary requiring the nobles assembled at Ainslie's tavern to sign the "band" for her marriage. The Scotch Commissioners alleged that this writing was found in the silver casket with the others. If such a writing existed, its production at the official inquiry would have been decisive. The authenticity of the other documents might be challenged. They had been seen presumably by Bothwell only. But here was a document which had been perused by all the chief nobility of the kingdom. Yet at the solemn conference at Westminster the warrant was not produced. It was never shown, except surreptitiously at York. Now the warrant produced at York was either written by Mary, or it was not. If it was written by Mary, it is impossible to believe that such a damnatory piece of evidence would have been afterwards withdrawn by the Lords; if it was not written by Mary it was *forged*, and the Lords did not produce it at the official conference, because they knew that the fraud would be immediately detected and summarily exposed. *Falsum in uno, falsum in omnibus*, is a maxim that applies here with irresistible force. One of



the writings was fabricated ; if one, why not all ? That no such warrant was produced at Ainslie's was afterwards admitted by Buchanan himself.<sup>1</sup> The fact, indeed, that at a later period Mary undertook, at their desire, to *pardon* the Lords for having signed the "band," sufficiently disproves the allegation that she had, by a writing under her hand, invited them to sign it. The mysterious and otherwise unaccountable disappearance of the fabricated warrant is one of the ugliest facts which the defenders of the Lords have to face.

9. The Conference adjourned to Westminster (where the whole members of Council were added to the commission), and in the absence of Mary's Commissioners, the "original" documents (which it now appeared were written in French) were *at last* produced,—with evident hesitation and reluctance. Would they stand the severe scrutiny to which they might be subjected ? The alarm of the Lords was natural but needless. Copies of the compromising letters were taken, and these copies were left with the Council ; "which writings," the minute bears, "being copied, *were read in French*, and a due collation made thereof as near as could be by reading and inspection, and made to accord with the originals which the said Earl Murray required to be redelivered."

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<sup>1</sup> History, Book xviii. § 26.

No examination of the letters (with the view of testing their genuineness) was made at Westminster; all that was done was to collate the copies with the originals, which were immediately returned to the Lords. When the letters had been duly copied and compared, the Council, along with six of the great nobles, were summoned to meet at Hampton Court. The results of the Conference were laid before them. The casket was again produced. Then, but not till then, the letters were compared with genuine letters addressed to Elizabeth. Why this vitally important examination should have been delayed till the last moment, and why, when it did take place, it should have been hurried over, are facts which have not been explained. No expert was called in, and the examination was suspiciously perfunctory and unscientific. "It is to be noted," Cecil frankly admits, "that at the time of the producing, showing, and reading of all these foresaid writings, *there was no special choice nor regard had to the order of the producing thereof*; but the whole writings lying altogether upon the Council table, the same were one after another showed rather by hap, as the same did lie upon the table, than with any choice made, as, by the natures thereof, *if time had so served*, might have been."

It is known that great pressure was brought

to bear upon the assembled Peers to induce them to return a verdict unfavourable to Mary; but the utmost that could be extracted from them was a prudent recommendation that Elizabeth should not admit Mary to an audience, "*as the case now did stand,*"—that is to say, upon the *ex parte* evidence which had been fraudulently laid before the Council by Mary's enemies in her absence. On hearing of what had taken place, Mary at once demanded that she should have access to the pretended letters; but after a good deal of fencing this was finally denied to her, and the Lords were hurriedly sent back to Scotland with the letters, being informed by Elizabeth before they left that "there had been nothing sufficiently produced nor shown by them against the Queen their sovereign, whereby the Queen of England should conceive or take any evil opinion of the Queen, her good sister, for anything yet seen."

It has been said, however, that Mary, throughout the Conference, manifested suspicious eagerness to prevent the production of the letters. The charge, which is a serious one, appears to be due to a misunderstanding.

The private conference to which Elizabeth proposed, and Mary agreed, that her cause should be referred, was purely *political* in its constitution and objects. Mary was to table a charge



*pro forma* against her revolted subjects, and they were to defend themselves on public grounds. The conference was intended to be the instrument by which an arrangement between Mary and the Lords should be carried through. But from the first Mary declined to allow any matter affecting her own honour to be introduced. If such matters were introduced, her Commissioners were instructed to protest, and withdraw from the Conference. Elizabeth was a party to this agreement. The bond was broken by Moray. He went secretly to the English Commissioners at York, and showed them copies of the Casket Letters. Mary's Commissioners were not permitted to be present,—did not know, indeed, for some days that such a breach of faith had been committed. But the moment that Mary heard of the plot, she took up a position from which she never wavered. Though her own Commissioners were scarcely so firm, Mary herself always said, "I consent to this private Conference with a view to an amicable adjustment of the difficulties between my subjects and myself. If, however, you bring against me any charge affecting my honour, accommodation is impossible. Thenceforth it must be war to the knife. And to no secret conclave can I consent to refer such an accusation. I must be heard in public before the Queen, the assembled Peers of Eng-



land, and the Ambassadors of Christendom. I will not trust such a question to the decision of any meaner tribunal. But I solemnly declare to the world that the pretended letters are not mine, but have been fabricated by my accusers. Let them be produced, and let me be furnished with copies. I pledge my word of honour to prove that they have been forged,—no such letters having ever been written by me.” Her own letter, when she heard of Moray’s treachery, is extraordinarily powerful and pathetic. “We have received the eik given in by the Earl Moray and his accomplices. And where they charge us with unnatural kindness toward our son, alleging we intended to have caused him follow his father hastily; howbeit the natural love the mother beareth to her only child is sufficient to confound them, and needs no other answer; yet considering their proceedings by-past, who did him wrong in our womb, intending to have slain him and us both, there is none of good judgment, but may easily perceive their hypocrisy, how they would fortify themselves in our son’s name till their tyranny were better established.” And then she instructs her Commissioners to obtain copies of the letters, so that she may establish her innocence.<sup>1</sup> But her re-

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<sup>1</sup> Mary to her Commissioners, | Calendar, 383.  
19th December 1568. Hatfield |

quest was disregarded. No—a public inquiry would not be granted. The letters were produced in her absence. Then she said, “Show me the letters—give me copies. I will undertake even before a tribunal which has disregarded the plainest rules of justice and fair dealing, to manifest that they are malicious inventions.” But again—No. The letters were always withheld from her (even though the French ambassador, at her instance, urgently expostulated with Cecil), and she was never allowed an opportunity to expose the deception.

It has been said again that she did not mean seriously to defend herself. She would go before the assembled peers, and on her honour as a sovereign princess declare that she had been falsely accused. She was a great actress, and she desired only a great stage on which to display her histrionic powers.

But it is forgotten that the moment she heard of the charges, she set herself to obtain the evidence that was available. She got Huntly and Argyll to declare in writing what they knew; and had it not been for the “protestation” thus obtained, we should never have learnt some of the most important facts of the case as telling against her accusers. This single document changed in one moment the whole aspect of the controversy. It was thenceforth impossible to

maintain that the Scotch Protestant nobles were not privy to the plot against Darnley. How much more might have been discovered had a really honest investigation been undertaken? It is forgotten, besides, that, rather than have the inquiry stifled, she ultimately consented to allow the case to proceed before the same secret tribunal. But her appeal was rejected. Elizabeth would neither hear her defence, nor permit her to see the letters. The Council, when hard pressed, declared that no charge against Mary had been substantiated, and despatched Moray and his famous casket across the Border in the depth of winter,—with £5000 in his pocket to pay his expenses.

It was a severe winter, one is rather glad to know, and Moray, who (to use his own words) “would have had his throat cut before he got to Berwick,” had he not pretended to favour the Norfolk marriage,<sup>1</sup> must have had an anxious journey. Hunsdon, who was waiting to convey him across the disturbed Border country, complains bitterly of the weather and of the people. “Here hath been so great a frost as, notwithstanding the gentle thaw, if repairs had not been done to the bridge, a great piece of it had lain in

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<sup>1</sup> Moray to Burleigh, 1569. | Moray quite frankly admits his  
(Harleian) Robertson, i. 449. | treachery.



the sea. I was fain to have it watched three nights, and rose one night, at two of the clock in the morning, to bring company to save it, when men were afraid to stand upon it; so that unless some order be taken for it, the next great frost it will away. In this town of Berwick it is not the least want that there is never a physician this side of York—if indeed there be any there. There are great troubles in Scotland, and great likelihood of greater, for every man doth what he lists. There used to be seven or eight houses of strength in the neighbourhood, to which the warden might repair upon occasion of service, but now there is not one that a man can lie dry in, the halls serving for the sheep and cattle at nights, and the chambers being used to store hay and corn.”<sup>1</sup>

Mary’s conduct during the Conference was thus, as far as I can judge, perfectly frank, simple, and straightforward, whereas Elizabeth’s was marked by constant duplicity,—there being abundant evidence to show that the investigation was conducted dishonestly. The Earl of Lennox, for instance, opportunely appeared at Westminster as one of Mary’s accusers; years afterwards Lady Lennox admitted that her husband had been induced to appear by the urgency

<sup>1</sup> Hatfield Calendar, pp. 389, 397.

of the English Council. If Elizabeth had ever been sincerely anxious to befriend the sister queen whom rebellious subjects had deposed, that time had passed before the conference met. Her instructions to Norfolk have been already referred to ; and the remarkable letter from Sussex to Cecil throws a yet clearer light upon the spirit in which the inquiry was thereafter conducted. "The object of the Council should be to retain Mary as a prisoner in England, and this could be effected only by rendering the breach between her and the Lords irreparable. If they could be induced to assail her honour, it was highly improbable that any truce, however hollow, could thenceforth be patched up between them. The pretended letters could not, indeed, be safely subjected to public investigation and hostile criticism, but they might be privately produced, and their tenor would be noised abroad. The mere rumour that such letters had been produced would cast a slur upon Mary's reputation, and lessen her influence in England, where she was growing dangerously powerful." Such was the substance of this remarkable communication ; and whoever attentively follows the subsequent proceedings of the Conference—the anxiety of the English Council to secure the production of the letters, and their steady, persistent resolution to prevent Mary and her friends from exam-

ining them—will find that the advice was acted upon to the letter.

The Council, as we have seen, did not venture to condemn the Queen, nor to declare that the letters were genuine; but even if such a declaration had been made, what would it have been worth? There are certain plain rules regarding the admission of evidence which are invariably observed in the courts of every civilised country. That reasonable precautions shall be taken to prevent documents from being tampered with; that in the event of challenge they shall be competently authenticated; that there shall be no break in the chain which connects them with the accused; that the accused shall be duly informed of their nature, and that he or his advisers shall have free access to them,—it has been found that the enforcement of some such rules as these is essential to the exclusion of false testimony, and to the righteous administration of justice. To call an investigation in which all these safeguards were notoriously disregarded a fair and honest attempt to arrive at the truth, is worse than absurd.<sup>1</sup>

10. For several years nothing further is heard of the letters. They were first made public in

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<sup>1</sup> The Minutes of the Conference have been frequently printed. They will be found in Murdin, Goodall, and elsewhere.



1571, appended to the 'Detectio Mariæ Reginae' of Buchanan, which was published in the Latin and Scots languages during that year,—a French translation appearing in 1572. There is no reason to suppose that the Latin version of the 'Detection' was not revised by Buchanan as it went through the press; and there is every reason to believe that the Scots version (published by authority of Cecil) was made by Buchanan himself, as it bears constant traces of his vigorous and sinewy style, and is perhaps the most perfect specimen of the classical Scots which we possess. The French edition, in spite of some transparent mystification, stands substantially in the same position,—it was the fruit of the obscure but sleepless activity of Cecil. Most of the letters were printed in the Scots and French editions,—three only in the Latin. It was presumed for two hundred years that the French versions—thus jointly guaranteed, as it were, by Buchanan and Cecil—were copied verbatim from the French originals, alleged to have been written by the Queen. A not unnatural presumption! But in 1754 a philological contribution to the controversy was made by Goodall, which, for ingenuity and research, deserves to rank alongside the works of the great critics who have exercised their wits on classical antiquity. He proved that the Scots letters were the original,

and that the French had been translated from the Scots, or from the Latin. This he did mainly by showing that the Scots, so to speak, were idiomatic and proverbial, and that in the French the Scots proverbs and idioms had been slavishly and clumsily reproduced. He showed, moreover, that the grossest blunders had been made by the translators. "I am irket (wearièd) and gangand to sleep," said the Scotch writer. The Latin translator, reading "nakit" for "irket," wrote "Ego nudata sum!" The French translator, exaggerating the blunder, exclaimed, "Je suis toute nue!"—I am stark naked!—a nice condition in which to write a letter to a lover during a winter night! Goodall held that the discovery entitled him to say that as the French letters which had been produced against Mary had undoubtedly been translated from another language which she barely understood, he had demonstrated that she did not write them, and that they must have been fabricated by those who produced them. This was so unanswerable that a change of front became necessary. The French versions, which for two hundred years had been regarded as the identical letters which had come from the pen of Mary Stuart, and which had been published as such by Buchanan and Cecil, were courageously repudiated. Admitting that Goodall was right, Mary's assail-

ants replied, — “ True, the French versions appended to the ‘ Detectio ’ are translations from the Scots ; but these are not the letters which were produced at Westminster ; the original letters in French are lost : what we now possess are translations into French made from the Scotch translation.” The weakness of the explanation is obvious. The only motive which could have induced Buchanan and Cecil to re-translate the Scotch translation into French would have been—the loss of the original French. Buchanan, however, was the literary apologist of the Confederate Lords ; and there can be no doubt that they placed all the materials in their possession at his disposal to enable him to compile his apology,—“ by him only for his learning penned, but by them the matter ministered.”<sup>1</sup> Is it conceivable that he was refused access to the original documents by those in whose defence he was engaged ? Then it is beyond question that Cecil was in possession of the French copies which were left at Westminster. Yet we are required to believe that both Cecil and Buchanan refused to use the originals which were in their own hands, and preferred to publish a version which was translated from a translation. It is surely more reasonable to hold that the existing

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<sup>1</sup> Goodall, ii. 377.



French versions were exact reproductions made at the time of the letters produced at Westminster. But then this reasonable view forces us to adopt one or other of two conclusions,—either that the Queen first wrote the letters in Scots and then translated them into French,—which is incredible; or otherwise that they were written for her (that is to say, *forged*),—which is by no means incredible.

But it is to be observed that while as regards those portions of the letters from which Goodall mainly derived his illustrations, no reply to him is possible, yet there are other portions of certain letters, and indeed whole letters, to which his argument does not apply. As regards certain letters or portions of letters, it has been shown that the French in which they are written is idiomatic, and that the Scotch versions have been made from the French. Now, assuming that we have in every case the letters produced at Westminster, it would appear reasonable to hold (1) that the vernacular French was not written by the person who wrote the corrupt French, and (2) that the letters in which vernacular French is mixed with corrupt French have been in some way tampered with. It has been observed, moreover, that it is the corrupt French, not the vernacular French, which contain the passages that compromise the Queen.

How are these singular facts to be explained? One plausible explanation has been suggested, and one only. The Confederate Lords had obtained — on the night it may be that Holyrood was sacked — notes, letters, diaries, poems, in the handwriting of Mary. These were subjected to a process of manipulation. Equivocal phrases, compromising allusions, were introduced. The work was rudely done, so much so that the interpolated passages can even yet be detected. But something more was needed,—some more unqualified admission of guilty intimacy and shameless sin. The Glasgow letter was either wholly or almost wholly fabricated. This is the letter (or letters) from which Goodall has taken his most pertinent illustrations; and if this letter is shown to have been manufactured, the case against the Queen breaks down.<sup>1</sup>

I will only venture to add here that (so far as I am able to form an opinion) the effect of the production of the letters before the Council, and of their subsequent publication in Buchanan's "little books," has been extravagantly exagger-

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<sup>1</sup> The persistency with which the Scots version appears and reappears is certainly very remarkable. A Scots version was sent to Elizabeth in June 1568; a Scots version was exhibited at York; the French versions published by Buchanan and Cecil were taken from the Scots. The Scots is the substance, the French is the shadow; and the question naturally arises — Was it ever anything more?

ated by later historians. The letters did not alienate Mary's friends either in England or Scotland. The great nobles, the statesmen and soldiers to whom they were exhibited, did not cease to support her. Many of them, like Lethington and Grange, sooner or later laid down their lives for her. Darnley's own mother, writing to Mary in 1575, besought her to trust in God that all would yet be well,—“the treachery of the traitors who accused you being now better known than before.”<sup>1</sup> It appears, therefore, to be a not unfair inference, that even when they originally appeared, the letters were not sincerely believed to be authentic by those behind the scenes. Cecil was extremely anxious that they should be published, and surreptitiously encouraged their publication; but the verdict of the Council had been substantially in favour of Mary; and the surreptitious publication, though it may have temporarily inflamed provincial animosities, did not influence the settled convictions of Catholic Europe. Long before Mary's tragical death the Casket Letters had virtually passed out of remembrance,—even the violent rhetoric of the ‘*Detectio*’ having failed to give them vitality as a permanent political force.

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<sup>1</sup> Countess of Darnley to Mary, 10th November 1575. National MSS. of England, III. 75.



11. Contemporary copies of certain of the letters have been preserved in two of our great libraries. Three are in the Record Office; three are at Hatfield. Of the letters in the Record Office which are supposed to incriminate the Queen, Mr Markham Thorpe, who prepared the Calendar of State Papers, relating to Scotland during her reign, emphatically declared, in his admirable introduction, that looked at in every light they were open to the gravest suspicion,—“abundance of insinuation, much assertion of guilt, but proof nowhere.” The members of the Historical Commission who are preparing the Calendar of the Papers at Hatfield have arrived substantially at the same conclusion,—none of the series can be used, they say, as direct evidence against Mary, and some of them have been suspiciously manipulated. In these circumstances an accomplished and impartial scholar like Mr Mandell Creighton is driven to conclude that “at present the balance of evidence seems to tend to the conclusion that the letters were forgeries.”<sup>1</sup>

I have now completed my examination of the historical testimony,—the external evidence of

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<sup>1</sup> Age of Elizabeth, p. 78. The original documents have long disappeared. They were returned to Morton in 1571, after the ‘Detectio’ had been prepared—(Goodall, ii. 91); some years later they were in the Earl of Gowrie’s possession.

the authenticity of the letters ; the examination of the internal evidence need not detain us for any time ; and it will tend to brevity if one of the letters only—the Glasgow letter or letters—is selected for criticism. The letters must stand or fall together (for if it was possible to fabricate one, it was possible to fabricate all) ; and if this letter, which is by far the most incriminating, is shown to be spurious, the critic's work is done. Besides the Glasgow letter, a considerable number of papers in prose and verse were "found" in the casket. The verses are possibly in the main genuine ; the Lords had enjoyed abundant opportunity to ransack Mary's private cabinets ; and assuming that it was proposed to fabricate an incriminating letter, it was obviously advisable to shuffle it up, and pass it off along, with writings that were authentic. It was advisable for two reasons—(1) Because the attention of those examining the documents would be diverted from a close, exhaustive, and dangerously exclusive examination of the fabricated letters ; and (2) Because, assuming that the forgery was not palpable, the genuine documents would incline the mind to a readier reception of the others. (The anticipation, as we know, was verified,—the mass of writings having been heaped upon the Council table, and examined at random.) If the verses were written by Mary (as is by no means

impossible), they were certainly written at an earlier period of her life. There is nothing in their form or treatment at least to connect them with a frantic passion for *Bothwell*. The woman who wrote them was *playing* with love. The poetical language of a soul ablaze with passion would have been very different.

A court of law is disposed to regard internal evidence, which is proverbially inconclusive, with scant respect; but it is seldom that internal evidence is so conclusive as in the case of the Casket Letters. It requires the fine critical acumen of a Bentley or a Jebb to detect the corrupt passages in a classical text; but we might as easily believe that "Hamlet" was written by Bacon, as that the Glasgow letter was written by Mary. Mary's letters, as a rule, are refined in tone, elegant in expression, harmonious in texture and composition. The Glasgow letter is coarse, awkward, and the merest patchwork. Of the Queen's singular felicity of expression there is no trace whatever,—a rustic wench trying painfully to write a letter to a sweetheart would have succeeded better. To my ear, moreover, there is a false note in the passion which it affects to disclose; it is crude, theatrical, violently overdone. "Have ye not desire to laugh to see me lie so well?" is a question that neither Mary nor Shakespeare would have put. A woman like

Mary, taking such vile work in hand, would have gone to the end in dogged silence, feeling the degradation of her treachery too keenly to boast of it even to her lover. Then there are passages so offensively unsavoury (as that which describes how Lord Livingston took her about the body when she was warming herself against him) that they could only have been written by a woman who had forfeited her self-respect, and lost all sense of decency. Apart from the letters, there is no proof that Mary was such a woman; and of the lurid and consuming flame of debasing passion which, if we are to believe the letters, made her for a day, a week, a month, the bond-slave and humble minister of Bothwell's ambition, there is no trace elsewhere in her life. It may be confidently affirmed, indeed, that Mary Stuart was the last woman in the world who would have prostrated herself in abject submission at the feet of a lover.

When we come to look at its form, as apart from its substance, the fragmentary character of the Glasgow letter is perhaps its most unaccountable feature. The different paragraphs into which it is divided are not joined together in any true sense. It lacks the unity of form as much as the unity of feeling. In the first place there is a paragraph of plain business-like nar-



rative, which might have been addressed to the Council (as perhaps it was),—the account of the journey to Glasgow and of her reception there. In the second place there is a paragraph devoted to a curiously and incomprehensibly minute relation (incomprehensible except in one view) of her conversations with Darnley. In the third place there are some violent explosions of jealousy and remorse. In the fourth place there is a table of contents. In the fifth place there is the interjected paragraph about Lord Livingston—eminently nasty. In the sixth place there are further explosions. In the seventh place there is the suspicious apology for the peculiarity of the handwriting,—“Excusez mon ignorance à escrier—excusez la briefueté des caractères.” And in the last place there is another table of contents, which contains, *inter alia*, this unaccountable intimation,—“Remember me of the Lord Bothwell!”

It is hard to believe that this singular and incoherent jumble could have been a love-letter addressed by Mary to Bothwell, and we may safely assert that such another love-letter does not exist. On the other hand it has been argued that no forger would have ventured to introduce such a multitude of petty allusions and irrelevant details, as occur in the report of the interviews with Darnley, into a fabricated document ; and it

may be conceded that a prudent forger would have *invented* as little as possible. But if he had pages of Mary's handwriting—jottings, half-finished memoranda, leaves from journal or diary—in his possession, or if he derived his information from an independent and presumably authentic narrative,—why should he have hesitated to use his materials with absolute freedom? How far the letter was fabricated, how far it consisted of memoranda in Mary's handwriting, it is impossible to say; but there is a large portion of it *which can be detached from the rest, and assigned to the original author.* For it is a remarkable fact—perhaps the most remarkable in this remarkable history—that another report of the voluminous conversations with Darnley is in existence. Robert Crawford, of whom we have heard before, was in attendance on Darnley at Glasgow, and in compliance with a request from Lennox—so he said—he noted down at the time, or shortly afterwards, the particulars of the conversations between his master and the Queen. Here then is Mary's alleged report to Bothwell on the one hand, and Crawford's report (obtained through Darnley, for he was not present) on the other. It is marvellous that two reports of the same conversation should have been preserved; but still more marvellous that the two should be identical—word for word. They agree, as Mr



Burton has innocently admitted, "with overwhelming exactness"—

THE DEPOSITION OF  
CRAWFURD.

"Ye asked me what I ment bye the crueltye specified in my lettres; yat proceedethe of yow onelye, that wille not accept mye offres and repentance. I confesse that I have failed in som thingis, and yet greater faultes have bin made to yow sundrye tymes, which ye have forgiven. I am but yonge, and ye will saye ye have forgiven me diverse tymes. Maye not a man of mye age, for lacke of counsell, of which I am very destitute, falle twise or thrise, and yet repent, and be chastised bye experience? If I have made any faile that ye wul think a faile, howsoever its be, I crave your pardone, and protest that I shall never faile againe. I desire no other thinge but that we may be together as husband and wife. And if ye will not consent hereto, I desire never to rise futhe from this bed. Therefore, I pray yow, give me an answer hereunto. God knoweth how I am punished for making mye god of yow, and for having no other thought but on yow. And if at ainie tyme I offend yow, ye are the

THE ALLEGED LETTER  
OF THE QUEEN.

"Ye ask me quhat I mene be the crueltye content in my letter; it is of yow alone, that will not accept my offeris and repentance. I confess that I have faillit, but not into that quhilk I ever denyit; and sicklyke hes faillit to sindrie of your subjectis, quhilk ye have forgiven. I am young. Ye will say that ye have forgiven me oft tymes, and yit yat I return to my faultis. May not ane man of my age, for lacke of counsell, fall twyse or thyrse, or in lack of his promeis, and at last repent himself, and be chastisit be experience? If I may obtain pardoun, I proteste I shall never mak faulte agane. And I craif na uther thing bot yat we may be at bed and buird togidder as husband and wyfe; and gif ye will not consent heirunto I sall nevir ryse out of yis bed. I pray yow tell me yoor resolution. God knawis how I am punischit for making my god of yow, and for having na uther thought bot on yow; and gif at ony tyme I offend yow, ye are the caus; because quhen ony offendis me, gif for my refuge

cause; for that when anie offendeth me, if for mye refuge I might open mye minde to yow, I would speak to no other; but when anie thing is spoken to me, and ye and I not beinge as husband and wife ought to be, necessitee compelleth me to kepe it in my brest," &c.

I nicht playne unto yow, I wold speiks it unto na uther body; but quhen I heir ony thing, not being familiar with yow, neccessitie constrains me to keip it in my briest," &c.

I venture to affirm that the two most skilful reporters in the world, sitting side by side, and recording the words as they fell from the lips of the speakers, could not have preserved a more perfect verbal accord. It is clear as day, indeed, that the two documents were drawn by the same hand, were coined in the same mint. But what does this imply? The persons for whom Crawford's report was prepared were the persons who afterwards produced the Glasgow letter; and the inference that the letter was (so far) copied from the deposition appears to be irresistible. Where the rest of the letter was taken from, we have at present no means of knowing.<sup>1</sup>

This is the case that has been made against

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<sup>1</sup> Here again the question of the original language of the letters comes in. Is it conceivable that that part of the (Scots) Glasgow letter which corresponds word for word with Crawford's deposition could have been translated from the

French? This is to reverse the natural order, which is,—  
1. Crawford's deposition; 2. Crawford's deposition copied into the Scots version of the Glasgow letter; 3. The Scots version of the letter translated into French.

the Casket Letters. I do not say that it is conclusive. Though it is extremely unlikely that the letters were written by Mary, yet it cannot be asserted with absolute certainty of conviction that she did not write them. The historian, however, is not required to address himself to the solution of problems which the lapse of time, or the animosity of partisans, may have rendered insoluble. He has to consider only whether certain documents, to which, ever since they were first produced, acute suspicion has been held to attach, can be accepted by him as material on which it is safe to build. For my own part, I am slow to believe that any entirely candid and cautious inquirer will henceforth be willing to accept the responsibility. He will hold, on the contrary, that the contents of Morton's casket have been insufficiently authenticated, and that Mary must be condemned, if condemned at all, upon other evidence.

## CHAPTER THREE.

### THE DOUGLAS WARS.

**T**HE death of Moray is a distinct landmark in the contest which had been begun when the Confederate Lords first rose against their Sovereign. Maitland had for some months now been regarded, both at home and abroad, as the leader of the Queen's party; on Moray's death the "King's men" had to look about for a new leader, and the new leader was found in Morton. The "dark and dangerous" Douglas was a man eminently suited to the time; and yet, from almost every point of view, his character was detestable. He was insatiably greedy. It was said of Moray that his avarice was like the bottomless pit; the saying might have been applied far more truly to Morton. He was notoriously and shamelessly profligate. He had no lawful issue; but the richest benefices in Scotland were held by a score of needy bastards. He was hard, cruel, unscrupulous. He had as little mercy for

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man as he had respect for woman. His rivals died like flies; and his Castle of Dalkeith—to which he sullenly withdrew when the evil mood was on him—was, in popular parlance, “the Lion’s Den.” But he was a strong man,—a man of no mean political sagacity who went straight to his mark. He had immense patience, unflinching firmness, dog-like tenacity. Though feared and hated, he was implicitly obeyed. The earlier Regents—Moray, Lennox, Mar—were puppets in his hand. He held Scotland in an iron grip. He brought the lawless Borderers to their senses,—“a matter not heard nor seen in many ages before.”<sup>1</sup> In spite of his vices, in spite of his crimes, he was the trusted leader of the Congregation: and though he treated the preachers with cynical insolence, and though his Tulchan Bishops were a scandal to the Church, yet in a sense he was always true to the Reformation. His lewd conversation, his filthy jests, his shameless greed, his rapacious exactions, his unclean life, were forgiven; for he was one of the “elect,” and do what he chose he could not forfeit his birthright.

The funeral of the Regent was the occasion of a great gathering of the Lords in Edinburgh; and by them—when the ceremony in St Giles’

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<sup>1</sup> Murdin, 203.

was over—Maitland was brought down from the Castle, and, being placed at the bar to answer the charge preferred against him by Crawford, was promptly acquitted. “After his coming he made ane perfect oration, in sic sort and manner, that all the Lords, yea, his verry enemies, judgit him to be innocent thereof.”<sup>1</sup>

Moray had been in a sense the lawful Regent: but Moray was gone; and the course was now clear for Mary. There would be no peace for the distracted country until their lawful Sovereign was restored. This was Maitland’s view, and it was the view of Grange, and Huntly, and Hume, and Herries, and Hamilton, and three-fourths of the peers and people of Scotland. But peace and prosperity in Scotland under Mary was a prospect which Elizabeth did not relish: nor did Morton; and between them they made peace impossible. The Scottish Anarchy was their joint work.

Elizabeth for fifteen years was the evil genius of Scotland. During all that time she did her best to make anything like orderly or settled government impossible. She did not desire, as so many of the English kings had desired, to extend the English border from the Tweed to the Tay. It would have been better, perhaps, if her

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<sup>1</sup> *Diurnal of Occurrents*, 158.



army, which more than once was sent to scourge the wretched country, had been permitted to remain. But whenever Mary's party had been sufficiently weakened and disheartened—so as to make the fratricidal conflict more equal—Sussex or Drury withdrew to Berwick,—leaving the exasperated kinsfolk to fight it out among themselves. It was Elizabeth's policy that Scotland should be (—not a subject province—but) weak, distracted, anarchical; and for more than three years after the Regent's death the policy was brilliantly successful. In the Devil's dance that was known as the Douglas Wars, the figures are obscure and phantasmal, like those that wheel round the Witches' Caldron on Brocken or Blasted Heath; the air is lurid and murky, heavy with poisonous fumes, on which, as on the dull February sky, gloomy shadows are projected,—“battles arrayit, spears and other weapons, and as it had been the joining of two armies.” Morton's ferocity was infectious; men who under other circumstances might have shown themselves liberal and humane were guilty of the abominable atrocities practised by savage tribes. For all this Elizabeth was responsible.

It has been alleged, indeed, that during these years Elizabeth was honestly anxious for Mary's restoration to her kingdom. She was her true friend. My own belief is, that whatever Eliza-

beth's professions might be (and while they blinded Maitland they even misled Cecil), she had implicitly resolved from the outset that the captive should not again be Queen. If Mary were to go back to Scotland, it must be as a criminal to be tried for her offences by a tribunal where the law was interpreted by Morton and the Gospel applied by Knox. Had the Scots, on the other hand, been left to themselves, it can hardly be doubted that Mary would have recovered her crown. With the Border clans at her back, Scott, Ker, and Hume on the eastern, Johnstone, Jardine, and Maxwell on the western marches, with all the great nobles, Chatelherault and Argyll, and Athol and Huntly, cordially united under Maitland, the issue after Moray's death could not have been doubtful. But whenever Mary's star rose above the horizon it was obscured by the thick cloud of Elizabeth's vindictive animosity and jealous alarm. Whatever course Mary's friends might take was construed into an affront. Morton and Mar were preparing to make such terms for themselves as Maitland would listen to when the English army was thrown across the Border. Ferniehurst and Branxholm were wrecked, the lands of Herries were harried, the castle of Chatelherault was burnt over his head. Negotiations without end were begun, protracted for months, and finally

broken off on some frivolous pretext, which, however, had been carefully provided. When Morton came to London to ratify the treaty of peace which the two Queens had virtually concluded, he suddenly discovered that he had no powers, and his apology was promptly accepted by Elizabeth. *Semper eadem*,—always the same story,—a policy of equivocation, of procrastination, of evasion,—a policy, however, which, through all its devious windings, had one end, and one end only, in view,—the ruin, directly or indirectly, of Mary Stuart. If Morton would make an end of her, well and good; if not, she would be kept in an English jail till she died.

It was the bad faith of Elizabeth in detaining Mary that Maitland most bitterly resented. He would have rejoiced to humiliate her; “to make the English Queen sit upon her tail, and whine like a whipped hound,” would have been true enjoyment. (It may well be doubted, however, whether the cautious diplomatist used these words; they are attributed to him, if I am not mistaken, on the authority of Sussex, and it was not likely that he would make Sussex his confidant.) It is manifest, indeed, that Maitland seriously believed all along that Mary in her English prison was not safe; and in a letter to Leslie he impressed upon the impulsive Bishop the absolute necessity of cautious dealing. What-



ever conditions were imposed by Elizabeth must be accepted by Mary, if thereby her liberation could be secured. "We are to yield in everything, and receive humbly at English hands what they please to give us. It breaks my heart to see us at this point that Englishmen may give us law as they will. Yield as little as ye may, but yield to all rather than she remain a prisoner, because I think her life always in danger *in medio nationis pravae*. You write of a secret purpose touching her escape. I pray you, beware, for albeit I would be content to be banished from Scotland all the days of my-life to have the Queen of Scots obtain her liberty without the Queen of England's consent (for the great discourtesy she has used toward her) rather than that she should have it with her consent, and I the best Earldom in Scotland — because I would she might be even with the Queen of England," — yet he could not advise Mary to press that way unless she was well assured there was no hidden snare. "I fear deadly the craft of her enemies," he adds. "Save her life whatever ye do, and sure I am that God with time shall bring all other things to pass to our contentment. But that point lost can never be recovered, and then all is gone."<sup>1</sup> Yet it is true

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Bishop of Ross, 17th August 1570.

that Maitland suffered himself to be deceived by Elizabeth; the letters she continued to write to him—"more gentle and loving than ever she did"—were not thrown away; for to the very end he believed that Mary would be restored, and that Elizabeth would come to see that her restoration was inevitable.

Maitland's efforts to avert the evils that were approaching did not succeed; and it is fair matter for argument whether, even if Mary with the help of Elizabeth had been restored, the Scottish anarchy, in one form or other, could have been averted. But no one can doubt that Maitland was sincerely convinced that through Mary, and through Mary only, was provisional truce or permanent peace to be obtained.

On the Regent's death Maitland lost no time in approaching the English ministers. The two arguments which he never failed to press during the next three years were that the party in favour of Mary's return embraced all the great and ancient houses of the realm, and that under Mary only could a stable government be formed. We gather from his letter to Cecil of the 26th January that the political consequences of Moray's death (if he should die) had been discussed by them during Maitland's attendance at the Westminster Conference.

“SIR,—This strange accident (whereof I think before this time you are more than sufficiently advertised) hath given me occasion presently to write unto you, and to reduce to your remembrances some discourses past betwixt us, the time of our being the last year in England. In the which, so far as I could conceive, you and I both agreed in judgment that, howsoever for a time our State here in Scotland might have a course, it could be of no long continuance, unless the dangerous division standing betwixt the Queen and nobility of this realm were brought to some accord, by means of the Queen’s Majesty your Sovereign. We could easily espy the necessity of a reconciliation, but the conditions were not so facile to be framed, which might be honorable for the one, and sure for both the parties. As I can remember, we did touch in communication some accidents that might fall out and be stumbling-blocks, as the death of the King, of the Regent, and such like, whereof the peril might grow to us; and whereupon we did collect the necessity of an accord. Now to my great grief one of the points which I ever feared has come to pass, and so we do remain in the briars; at which end to find an issue I see not, unless your mistress take some convenient course both for herself and us: You know the estate of



Christendom, how it doth stand for the present, better than I; You know the state of your mistress's affairs; upon which two you may well collect, which way will best serve her turn, as well presently as hereafter. I dare not presume to prescribe you any certain rule, nor yet am I myself tied to any resolute conclusion; but I trust when you shall remember how the world goeth you shall not think it impertinent yet to consider if there remain any means of an accord. You know of old what reverence I bear to your person, and how highly I do esteem your judgment which maketh me to submit mine unto yours; so that I am rather to be directed by you (if you find any aptness in me) than to trouble you with anything I can invent: Always in me you shall find no change of affection, if either the Queen's Majesty or you will employ me in anything may tend to the conservation of the mutual intelligence betwixt the countries and common wealth of both; Howsoever some have gone about to persuade you of the contrary, I pray you keep one ear for me; and whensoever you will examine my doings, you shall find by my answers to you, that I shall disavow nothing that is true, nor disguise my dealings, but simply avow wheresoever I have been a medlar in anything; as also that I have never been privy to any practice whereby, directly or indirectly, prejudice

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hath been meant to the Queen's Majesty, her person or estate.—Yours at commandment,

“ W. MAITLAND.<sup>1</sup>”

“ *From LETH(INGTON) CASTLE  
the 28 of January 1569.*”

The letter which Maitland addressed to Leicester in March was much more explicit. He explained that there were two factions in the country, the King's and the Queen's,—the King's being supported by three or four of the meanest among the Earls, by several of the lesser barons, and by the larger burghs; the Queen's by the next of blood, the first in rank, the most ancient and the most opulent of the nobles, and by a great number of the inferior sort throughout the realm. The mandate which Moray held had lapsed, and his removal was daily adding to the number of those who favoured Mary's restoration, and who were already, indeed, more than a match for their rivals. If the Scots were left to themselves, there could be no doubt of the issue. But would they be left to themselves? There were ominous rumours, which, however, he refused to credit, that an English force was to be thrown across the Border to weaken and intimidate the party who were

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Cecil, 26th Jan. 1570. Haynes, 575.

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loyal to their lawful sovereign. Elizabeth would be ill advised to sanction such a proceeding, for it would drive the loyalists, whose alliance was courted both by France and Spain, to seek aid elsewhere. "This, for my own part, I abhor, and desire never to see a stranger set foot on this land; yet I know not what point necessity may drive us to; as if men in the middle of the sea were in a ship which suddenly should be set on fire, the fear of burning would make them leap into the sea, and thereafter the fear of the water would make them cleave again to the ship; so for avoiding a present evil, men will many times have recourse to another not less dangerous." If Elizabeth, however, would proceed by treaty—instead of by force—she might reconcile the factions, and save the State.<sup>1</sup> Towards the close of the month, a letter "dyted by the Secretar," and signed by a score or more of the Queen's Lords—Huntly, Argyll, Athol, Home, Erroll, Eglintoun, Crawford, Marischal—was directed to Elizabeth, in which she was assured that she would find it unprofitable if she joined her fortune with "a small portion of this realm," when she might have the whole at her devotion.<sup>2</sup> The conditions of more than one agreement be-

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Leicester, 20th  
March 1570.

<sup>2</sup> Calderwood, ii. 547.

tween the Queens, which would be acceptable to all parties in Scotland, were sketched by Maitland; and though in one form or other they involved the restoration of Mary, the most wary of the soldier-statesmen of England could not see that they were "amiss."<sup>1</sup>

Maitland's anxious efforts to pacify the contending factions would probably have been successful, had it not been for Elizabeth. Elizabeth could not afford to see the Scots united, and the smouldering flame of faction was stirred up by her envoy, who—a bird of evil omen—was again in the northern capital. Though Randolph's crafty counsels and obscure intrigues were keenly resented by moderate politicians like Argyll, Morton lent a ready ear to proposals which flattered his avarice and his ambition. The seeds of division were quickly sown. The English faction met at Morton's—either in Edinburgh or at Dalkeith; while Maitland's house in the Meal Market was the rendezvous of the Lords who were well affected to Mary. "In the month of March the Lords of baith parties comperit in Edinburgh; the Queen's faction lugeit themselves near the Castle, and were callit by the other party in derision *The Lords of the Meal Market*; for the Secretaire

<sup>1</sup> Many "plats" were attributed to Lethington, and two of them at least are in his handwriting.

also lugeit there." We learn from Buchanan that during this time so many Lords met daily at Maitland's house, to which he was confined by the gout, that it was commonly called the School, and he the Schoolmaster. The negotiations between the parties, after being carried on for some time, broke down; Morton and Elizabeth between them made a reasonable composition impossible; and before Maitland and his friends had time to quit the capital, the invading army was across the Border. His mortification at the failure to arrive at a settlement was extreme, and Elizabeth's unreasonableness was severely denounced. "It is a mystery to me," he wrote to Cecil with unusual bitterness, "whereof I cannot conceive the reason, that so many noblemen who would be glad to do the Queen of England service, should be altogether neglected by her for the pleasure of a few, inferior to them in every way, whereby in their defence they are constrained to seek foreign aid." "The faction that aspires to rule without reason, and can be content neither with fellowship nor union, lays the whole burthen on me." He was still ready, however, to do his utmost for peace, and to let bygones be bygones. "Every way be sure I shall not be Lot's wife."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Historie of King James the | Maitland to Cecil, 17th May  
Sext, 51. Buchanan, Book xv. | 1570.



Maitland's conviction that Mary's party was the stronger appears to have been well grounded. Huntly was supreme in the northern counties, as was Athol in the central, and Argyll in the western, Highlands. Huntly, Athol, and Argyll were far, no doubt, from the political centre (so that the fray was sometimes over before they had time to rally their retainers); but the immense possessions of the Hamiltons lay in the immediate neighbourhood of the great southern burghs, while the passes leading to England were held by warlike clans who had been stricken with shame by Moray's perfidy to Northumberland, and were now devoted to Mary. Randolph, who came to "kindle the fire," was forced unwillingly to admit that so far as he could judge the Queen must finally prevail.<sup>1</sup> Soon after his election, the new Regent—Lennox was elected in July—advised the English ambassador that it was impossible for him, without English aid, to resist the enemies who were closing round him,—Huntly from the north, the Hamiltons from the west, Herries, Lochinvar, Buccleuch, Ferniehurst, from the Border dales.<sup>2</sup> Sussex was thereupon instructed (on the pretext of punishing the Dacres) to divert the threatened

<sup>1</sup> Melville, 107.

<sup>2</sup> Lennox to Randolph, 31st July 1570.



attack, by ravaging the Western Borders.<sup>1</sup> And there is a well-known "memorial" by Cecil, prepared early in March—six weeks after Moray's death—in which, on the ground that Mary's faction was rapidly increasing and the King's rapidly decaying, he recommended that the army should be instructed to enter Scotland and "chastise her Majesty's rebels."<sup>2</sup>

The Secretary's instructions, as we know, were carried out to the letter. Sussex swore that before the light of the coming moon was passed a memory should be left in Scotland which the youngest child would not forget. "Ninety strong castles, towers, and dwelling-houses, with three hundred towns and villages, were utterly destroyed." The Kers, the Scotts, and the Humes were "harried" because they were Mary's friends. So were the Hamiltons; so were the Maxwells. The devastation in Lanarkshire was "in sic sort and manner as the like in this realm has not been heard before." The "poor tenants and friends" of Fleming and Livingstone on the Monkland were so "herried that nae heart can think thereon but the same must be dolorous."<sup>3</sup> At length Sussex, half ashamed of the havoc he had wrought, ordered the army

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth to Sussex, 26th July 1570.

<sup>2</sup> Hatfield Calendar, 465.

<sup>3</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents, 177.

home. Maitland with ironical courtesy congratulated him on his success. There had been nothing like it, he said, for a hundred years. "You tell me that her Majesty's forces are revoked. I am glad thereof more than I was at their coming, and indeed it is not amiss that they should have a rest and a breathing-time between one exploit and another. This is the third journey they have made in Scotland since your Lordship came to the Borders, and if the amity and good intelligence between the realms which now prevail would permit me to use a phrase not unknown to our forefathers, I would say that they have reasonably well acquitted themselves of the duties of 'auld enemies,' and have burnt and spoiled as much ground within Scotland as any army of England did in a year these hundred years by-past, which may suffice for a two months' work, though you do no more. The rude people of Scotland are apt to speak rashly, but I am content to use a phrase of your own language with which you are acquainted, and to acknowledge that you have not been idle in the pursuit of her Majesty's rebels."

Meantime Maitland had quitted the capital. He was far from well: the disease of which he died had already declared itself: but his spirit was unbroken and his enthusiasm contagious. "Ay sen syne," Buchanan wrote in 1571, "he

has been at all convocations of the King's professit enemies in Scotland—in Dunkeld, in Athol, in Strabogie, in Braidalbine, and elsewhere." While Lauderdale was being ravaged by Forster (old Sir Richard was very angry, and abused the Englishmen in a spirited poem), William Maitland took up his abode at Blair of Athol, where he continued to reside till the autumn of the year. "Before the army returned to Edinburgh"—the English army which had been engaged in the destruction of Hamilton—"the Bird in the Cage took his flight from the Castle of Edinburgh, and lighted at length in the Blair of Athol, where he remained practising his auld craft till the month of August. Confound him and his malicious mind!"<sup>1</sup> The Bird in the Cage, it may be observed, was one of the many *sobriquets* applied to Maitland by the satirists of the Regent's faction:—

"A baleful bird that wantis wings to fle,  
Nurrist in a nest richt craftie wyles to hatch."

"Mitchell Wylie's sore feet" was also from this time a favourite theme for the brutal wit and ferocious invective of the writers of Lekprevik's broadsheets. The refrain of the well-known ballad in which "*The crookit leads the blind*" is directed, I presume, as much against the bodily

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<sup>1</sup> Bannatyne's Narrative, 22.

as against the mental infirmity from which the Secretary was understood to suffer.<sup>1</sup>

It was at Blair of Athol that most of the interesting letters addressed by Maitland to his numerous correspondents during his absence from Edinburgh were written. Surrounded by the faithful clansmen of his brother-in-law (the Earl had married Margaret Fleming), a difficult pass between him and the fanatical burghers of Perth and Dundee, he could hatch his "craftie wiles" at leisure in this secure and secluded retreat. His friends joined him there, and at the Council of Balloch above Dunkeld, the Secretary, it was rumoured, had enough to do to conciliate the rivalries of the various leaders,—“which perceived of the Great God the Secretaire, he laid sic a plaster to that wound of variance as he could for the time.”<sup>2</sup> The rumour was possibly unfounded; but it correctly indicated the popular feeling that no man or woman who had been brought into close contact with Maitland could resist the singular persuasiveness of his “fell tongue.” “You know who it is that enchanteth all the wits of Scotland,” Randolph wrote to Cecil with significant emphasis. According to Calderwood, Maitland was “the soul of all the

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<sup>1</sup> All these broadsheets were printed in 1570. Thorpe, i. 284.      <sup>2</sup> Bannatyne, 38.

godless band," and Sussex declared, at the beginning of the conflict, that "his party can do nothing without him."<sup>1</sup> To their "Grit God the Secretaire" the nobles lent a ready ear; and the Duke and Argyll and Huntly and Athol were as wax in his hands. "The Lord Hume, as a man desperate, came to seek comfort from his Grit God the Secretaire." "The Thursday thereafter was the Duck brought furth of the Castle, and made his harangue to the Grit God the Secretaire, before whom he poured forth his prayers."<sup>2</sup> A secular satirist might have been permitted to write in this fashion without rebuke; but coming from John Knox's own servant it sounds just a little profane. It is only fair to remember, however, that Bannatyne, in spite of his devotion to his master, was a born fool. It was difficult to make Knox ridiculous; but "gude godly Mr Richard" on more than one occasion nearly attained the distinction.

The curious letters which passed between Maitland and Sussex at this time, in which Sussex assailed, and Maitland justified, his conduct to Mary, are more than ordinarily interesting. They do not throw much light indeed upon the reasons which induced him to consent

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<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 2d May 1570. | Sussex to Cecil, 9th May 1570.  
 Calderwood, ii. 544. | <sup>2</sup> Bannatyne, 11, 13.



to the Queen's temporary deprivation; but they certainly show that Moray's rigorous policy to his sister was from the first resisted and resented by Maitland. Mr Tytler fancied that Maitland's plea that a complete explanation must needs "touch more than himself," referred to his royal mistress; to me it seems much more likely that he alluded to the obligation of secrecy by which (though his official relations with the Lords had since ceased) he held that he was still in honour bound. The letters have not been hitherto printed; and, as specially characteristic of the writer, one or two of them may here be given. It is necessary to select, for Maitland's pen was never more busy than when he was rustivating in Athol. Bannatyne complains, indeed, that during the Secretary's absence, "the posts gat no rest between the Castle and the north."

Maitland had been in communication with Sussex for some time, but the earlier letters have no special interest. The letter of 2d June is the first to which attention need be directed. It is a reply to one from Sussex written on 30th May, in which the English general had animadverted on Maitland's, and justified his own, conduct. If Sussex—Maitland wrote back—had procured the liberation of his brother, and the restitution of his goods, he would remember a good turn,—“for in good faith I do not so much



regard the restitution of the goods, as that the Border men on both sides should have occasion to think that Rowland Forster might unpunished do an open injury to me and mine."

Sussex had accused him of dealings with the French and of discourtesy to Elizabeth. The truth was — Maitland replied — that he had written freely to Leicester and Cecil, but had received no answer. "Wherein I might well conceive they intended not to burden me with anything, and therein I have cause to praise their discretion that had so good consideration of the inability of my person, which hath need rather of repose than to be continually tossed with the tale of public affairs." What mind he had to draw the French or any other strangers into Scotland could be gathered from his own letters. On one point he had been always explicit; he altogether disliked that Elizabeth by any man's persuasion should go about to suppress or discredit the greater part of the nobility for the pleasure of another faction inferior to them in all respects. He had also wished that by her Majesty's means such an accord might be made between the Queen of Scotland and her people as might stand with the honour of the Queen of England, the surety of the whole nobility of Scotland, and the continuance of the amity betwixt both realms; so that thus no foreign prince

should have occasion to meddle in any matter concerning the Isle. This was the mark he had always shot at, whatever his enemies might say, and his enemies would no doubt say the worst of him. "Upon two points all my actions shall rest; the quietness of my native country and conservation of the amity between England and Scotland. Whatever may serve to these ends, I shall set forward to my uttermost."

The excuse made by Sussex that he would have withdrawn the English army had his overtures been accepted by Maitland was one, he remarked, that took him by surprise. He had anxiously considered every proposal that had been made, and would do so again, "for in my dealing you shall find no subtlety." He was glad to hear that the army was to be recalled. They deserved a breathing-time; for they had done more harm in one year than any army of the "auld enemies" these hundred years by-past. Though he was afraid that the Scottish nobles would not now be so ready to treat as before their country was spoiled and their houses ruined, yet he would do his best. "I find no time unfit to do good."

The efforts made by Sussex to have Maitland's property restored were not successful; but in his letter of 10th June Maitland thanks the English general warmly for the trouble he had

taken. "So that finding no lack of goodwill in your Lordship, I remain for my part fully contented, although I should never recover one groat's worth." He had not yet heard from Huntly, Argyll, and the Duke; for they were far asunder; but he hoped to do so shortly. For himself he was prepared to accept the conditions proposed by Sussex—one point only reserved,—that no rigour should be practised to the Queen of Scots to content a faction in Scotland; a faction which without Elizabeth's countenance would forthwith come to nought. "I trust your Lordship hath not as yet found any lack of plainness in my writing; no more you shall in my doing. If there be anything amiss it is that I write sometimes too frankly. I pray you find no fault therein, for it is my nature both to speak and to write liberally to such as I am familiar with." He added that the more Sussex saw of the Lords who were against Mary the less he would like them.

Maitland's letter of 16th July is probably the most interesting of the series. It discusses with much animation the speculative puzzles which had been submitted by Sussex. The English general had pointed out that Maitland, who had at one time, as he contended, been urgent for rigorous dealing with Mary, was now on her



side. Could that be unjust to-day that yesterday was just? Were good and evil to be judged by the affections of the moment? Sussex in support of his thesis had appealed not to the Scriptures only, but to the Civil Law and Moral Philosophy,—subjects, of which Maitland declared—possibly with undue humility—that he himself knew little. Yet small learning, he continued, was needed for his justification. “But first, I must complain that you require in me a more firm cleaving to an opinion which hath once entered into my head than were fit. Your Lordship will not profess that you have never changed your mind even in matters of great consequence. I remember to have read in a good author, one who in his time was no ’prentice in the politick science (being from his youth brought up in that trade), that it was never praised in those that were excellent in the government of the commonwealth to remain perpetually in one opinion, but, as in sailing, it is a chief point of the master’s art when ruling his ship to direct his course as the stormy blasts of wind and weather shall permit,” so in political matters a certain judicious pliancy was needed. Zeno indeed had held that a wise man never changed; but not being a wise man, he would take the liberty to judge indifferently of

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things according as he saw likelihood of success. Had he been a scholar in philosophy, he would not have directed his study after the intractable discipline of the Stoics, but would rather have become a student in that school where it is taught that wise men's minds must be led by probable reasons—the doctrine that the disciples of Plato and Aristotle had embraced. “*That same firm, certain, unchangeable, and undoubted persuasion which is requisite in matters of faith must not be required of men in matters of policy.*” If in causes touching the State he had been led by probable reasons to change his mind, why should he be blamed? And if the later mind were the better mind, he could say with great divines, *Non pudet nos errores nostros revocare.* If such a constancy (which he would rather term obstinacy and pertinacity) were to be required of men (as if they had entered into a bond or obligation with themselves and each other), then they must beware to utter any opinion whatever. The Queen of England reserved right to like that which formerly she disliked; why should he not have the same freedom, if the welfare of his country required it at his hand? The Scripture allowed that good and evil were relative terms, in so far as good things might be abused, or the reverse;

and the Roman juriconsults taught that the least variation in causes, times, places, persons, occasions, might alter the decision that should be given. So also the moral philosophers. *Bonum et malum*, in short, must be read by politicians as meaning profitable and unprofitable, fit or unfit, for the purpose in hand. "If two or three years ago I had thought a matter convenient to be done which now I think altogether unfit, shall it be reckoned as inconstancy? I think not. More years have brought with them more experience, and no marvel if experience have taught me things whereof before I was ignorant. The chief thing we ought most to respect is our country, the common parent of us all, and the quiet thereof. To that end we must direct all our actions." He may have thought once that a policy would be universally approved by his countrymen which he now found would only lead to discord. (And yet he had been of opinion from the first that the Scottish quarrel should be referred to an indifferent umpire who could conciliate the various factions.) Sussex had said that the persons, the causes, the matters, were the same; this was not so; time had altered many things. The person of the Regent Moray, for instance, was a circumstance of no small moment; for with his death there was



an end of the government to which they had consented. Then, in so far as the Queen was concerned, that might now be rigorous dealing which two years ago was not. "To keep a man a month in prison, or to restrain his liberty for a few days for sufficient considerations, may well stand with equity, whereas it might be accounted great rigour if the same person were detained seven years captive. To sequestrate the Queen's person for a season might perhaps be excused, but to keep her all her days in close prison were rigour intolerable. I know that for our affirmation or denial nothing is changed of the substance of things; nor are they good or ill, rigorous or equitable, because we think them so. But we must think them good or ill, rigorous or equitable, because they are so indeed. What *I* think to be rigour is not material; but what I trust the Queen your Sovereign will have regard to is, what in honour and conscience she thinketh, and what throughout Christendom in the judgment of men free from passion will be thought, to be rigour. It may be that your Lordship has seen me with those that have earnestly persuaded worse to be done to the Queen of Scots. But sure I am you have not known me to be a persuader of such matters against her. I never went about from the beginning to per-

suade her destruction, nor meant at any time ill to her person. There be noblemen and others of good credit yet living who can bear me record that within a month after the late Regent accepted office, I dealt earnestly with him to accord with his Queen. The same advice I renewed many times after, before his going to England; how earnestly I did press him in England to follow that course, numbers of men, English and Scotch, do know,"—the English Council, he added, nay Elizabeth herself, having been privy to it. From first to last, indeed, he had been in favour of an accord. He had sometimes, he admitted, spoken and done more than Mary could digest at the moment. But his object had ever been to hold the balance just, that it might not sway too much to one side or the other, and thereby hinder the accord. "I have insisted the more upon this head because it doth touch me near."

One other letter remains to be noticed. Sussex had professed that he was not convinced, and had renewed the attack. But Maitland had said what he had to say, and refused to prolong a barren discussion. "Although I should make no answer to it, it can nothing prejudice the matters we have in hand, seeing that the whole argument consisteth of the accusation of me for

(as you think) the late alteration of my mind, which is rather *ad hominem* than properly appertaining to the cause. For as I wrote in other letters, what *I* think to be done or not to be done is not material. But what in reason and in honour ought to be done is to be considered. The cause in itself is neither the better nor the worse for my doings, whether they have been good or ill. Although I can directly answer the principal heads of your Lordship's letter, and sufficiently refute the most part of the objections laid out against me, yet for good respects I will forbear, seeing my silence can no ways be prejudicial but to myself. If I should directly enter to purge myself, I must enter in a discourse which must needs touch more than myself, and rather than do so, I will suffer that in the mean season men judge of me and my actions as shall please them. Besides that, I will not deal in logomachy with your Lordship, with whom I have to deal in matters more profitable for the quiet of both the countries. In the meantime, I doubt not that your Lordship will judge of me charitably, remembering St Paul's rule; where he doth advise us to beware to judge *Servum alienum*, he doth add these words,—*Domino suo stat vel cadit*. What my behaviour was towards the Queen, either the time I was in England or before, I must be answerable to herself, and when

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my doings shall be examined, and I called to account therefor, I trust by God's grace they shall be as able to abide the trial of any indifferent judge as any man that was of the faction there. Your Lordship will bear with me if for good and necessary considerations I forbear to insist any more upon this head. There will be a time when I, with less danger, and your Lordship's better contentation, may particularly satisfy your Lordship touching myself in everything wherein you now stand in suspense."<sup>1</sup>

Maitland returned to Edinburgh on 11th April 1571. On that day he entered the Castle, which he was not to quit till the Castle was in ruins. The rest of his life—what of it remained—was spent within the walls of the fortress which crowned the bold rock that dominates the Lothians. When they brought him out to the walls of a summer morning—high above the turmoil of the streets, and the murmurs of the angry burghers—he could look across the Forth to Fife, past the Ochils to Ben Lomond and Ben Ledi. Here, at any rate, he was safe from the malice of his enemies; and he was too busy to find the confinement irksome. The Castle was the strongest place in Scotland, and the undisci-

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Sussex, 9th August 1570. All these letters | are in the Record Office.

plined forces of the Regents could make no impression upon it. They were flung back again and again, and until the English cannon were dragged across the marshes of the Merse, Lethington and Grange could afford to smile at the bungling strategy of their rivals.

The disease from which Maitland suffered—a form of paralysis or creeping palsy—had been rapidly developed during his absence from Edinburgh. The most active-minded man in Scotland was now a helpless cripple. The author of ‘The Historie of King James the Sext’ asserts that Lethington “departit this life suddenly of an *auld disease* of the impotence of his legs.” But in 1571 Maitland’s illness could not have been of long standing. I am not aware, indeed, that there is any allusion to his bodily weakness prior to 1570. The wits of the Congregation first began to make merry with his infirmities in the spring of that year. They then, indeed, professed to believe that the “gut,” as they called it, was one of his “craftie shifts.” “He pretendit the inabilityie of his bodie; but the truth was they could do nothing without him, more than the wheel can do without the ax-tree. He was lustie enough at his table, both at noon and even.”<sup>1</sup> This refers to the early days of March, when the

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, ii. 544.



Lords were resorting to his house in the Meal Market: towards the end of the month he went to meet the French Ambassador at Niddrie in West Lothian. "The Secretar was unable of his body, yet must he be carried hither in a coach."<sup>1</sup> Whatever his enemies might insinuate, however, it is clear enough, from contemporary letters, that Maitland's sickness was not feigned. "I doubt nothing so much of him," Randolph wrote, "as I do of the length of his life. He hath only his heart whole and his stomach good, with an honest mind, more given to policy than to Mr Knox's preachings. His legs are clean gone, his body so weak that it sustaineth not itself, his inward parts so feeble that to endure to sneeze he cannot, for annoying the whole body. To this," Randolph cynically concludes, "hath the blessed joy of a young wife brought him."<sup>2</sup> His health had probably improved in the keen air of Athol; but he must have had a relapse either at Aberdeen or at Strathbogie; for he was perfectly helpless when in April 1571 he landed at Leith,—from whence he was transported to the Castle on a litter. "On Tuesday the tenth of April, the heid of wit, the Secretaire, landed in the night at Leith,

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, ii. 550.

<sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 1st March 1570.



where he remained till the morn, and was borne up by six workmen with sting and ling, and Mr Robert Maitland hauling up his head, and when they had put him at the Castle yet, ilka ane of the workmen gat three shillings, which they receivit grudgingly, hoping to have gotton mair for their labours.”<sup>1</sup>

The vigour and elasticity of Maitland’s intellect, however, had been in no degree impaired by his broken health. “His wits are sharp enough,” the English envoy reported in March 1570. Randolph saw him again, and for the last time, in March 1572. Then he was too ill to rise from his chair; but his temper was as equable, his head as cool, his mind as unclouded as in his best days; and his fidelity to his mistress was unshaken. “Never,” Morton’s partisan angrily declared, “never have I found in so weak a body a man less mindful of God, or more unnatural to his country.” His sufferings during the siege must have been excessive; the rough soldier-life of the camp could not but be trying to an invalid whose nerves had been rendered sensitive by protracted pain; and we learn that when the cannons were fired the soldiers carried him down into the vaults below St David’s tower, “because he could not abide the shot.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bannatyne, 130.    <sup>2</sup> Advices out of Scotland, 10th Feb. 1573.

Maitland's cold and sarcastic humour did not invite sympathy ; he was, as a rule, very taciturn about himself—seldom repining, never boasting ; yet there must have been in him—in this reticent and somewhat hard and cynical man—an inner fire, and the stuff of which martyrs are made.

The figure of the Marian leader, indeed, during these miserable years, cannot fail to impress the imagination. The Bird was in the Cage. The king of the forest had been stricken down by mortal sickness. Yet it may be said without exaggeration that Maitland from his sick-bed governed Scotland. The Cruikit led the Blind. The Regents were men of straw,—all save Morton, whose turn as Regent had not yet come ; so were Hume and Chatelherault and Huntly. Maitland, on the other hand, as Mr Froude has said, was probably “the cleverest man, as far as intellect went, in all Britain.” Kirkaldy was a brilliant soldier ; but Maitland's brain was the “ax-tree” which held his party together. The strain must have been great. Argyll had already deserted Mary ; Langside had been lost by his incapacity, and now he had publicly crossed over to the enemy,—bribed, it was believed, rightly or wrongly, by the unscrupulous Morton, who had persuaded the Kirk to divorce him

from his wife.<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth's persistent hostility was no longer disguised,—the Ridolphi conspiracy having frightened her into frankness. Yet all men knew that while Maitland lived—spite of Cecil and Elizabeth, spite of Morton and Argyll,—Mary's cause was not hopeless.

The history of Scottish parties from 1570 to 1573 is a tangled labyrinth, through which it is difficult to pick one's steps. I have thought that a bird's-eye view of the more striking incidents of the civil strife—taken, let us say, from Maitland's coign of vantage on the Castle rock—would prove more instructive than a minute and wearisome narrative of obscure intrigues and barbarous forays. From the Castle we can descend to the Edinburgh streets, and the immediate neighbourhood of the capital. It was round the capital that the main interest centred; but there may be time for a glance at the remoter pro-

<sup>1</sup> "Withal the Lords of the Regent's part so assisted Argyll that he was parted from his lawful wife, and adjoinit himself in marriage with a daughter of this Robert, Lord Boyd; and ilk ane of them obtenit a fat Kirk benefice in recompence of their declining" (*Historie of King James the Sext*, 85). "The greedy and insatiable appetite for benefices was the maist cause thereof" (the falling away from the Queen), "for there was nane brought under the King's obedience but for reward either given or promised. Also the Earl of Argyll was greatly persuaded hereto by Lord Boyd, who persuaded the Kirk to part the said Earl and his wife" (*Diurnal of Occurrents*, 238).

vinces, where Adam Gordon, in a brilliant campaign, was restoring the authority of the Queen.<sup>1</sup>

Of the life within the Castle itself, we hear little,—what information we have being mainly derived from Maitland's letters.<sup>2</sup> An eyewitness, however, has recorded the incidents of a singular and interesting conference between the Secretary (who had by this time, however, been deprived of his office) and the ministers of the Kirk. Mr Burton believed that John Knox was present,—Knox being the "Mr John" to whom Maitland addressed his argument; but I suspect that Mr Burton was wrong. It appears that the interview took place when the Canongate Parliament of 1571 was sitting; the Canongate Parliament did not meet till the 14th of May, and John Knox had left for St Andrews on Saturday the 5th. I am afraid, therefore, that the aged Reformer could not have been present. It is a pity; for his presence would have added considerably to the interest of a scene which even in his absence must have been striking enough.

"At our entry in the Castle, we past to the

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<sup>1</sup> Most of the incidents noted occurred between the spring of 1571 and the summer of 1572; but strict chronological order is not preserved.

<sup>2</sup> The successive messengers from England were permitted to enter; but their polemical and political despatches throw little light upon the scene.

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Great Hall on the south side, where soon after Sir James Balfour came to us; and thereafter the Lord Duke, and at last the Captain of the Castle; who desired the Lord Duke and us also to enter in the chamber within the said Hall, where the Lord Secretaire was sitting before his bed in a chair. My Lord Duke sat down. So the Captain desired us all instantly to sit down, which we did.”<sup>1</sup>

The ministers intimated that they had come to learn whether the Lords were prepared to offer any articles or terms which might lead to peace.

*The Lord Secretar.* Mr John, ye are overwise. We will make no offer to them that are in the Canongate; for the principal of the nobility of Scotland are here, to whom they who are in the Canongate are far inferior in rank. Therefore it

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<sup>1</sup> Through the energy of Major Gore Booth of the Royal Engineers, and the munificence of an Edinburgh publisher, the “Great Hall” has been recently restored. I am not sure that it is possible to identify “the chamber within the said Hall” which was occupied by Lethington as a bedroom; it was probably one or other of the rooms between the Great Hall and the room known as Queen Mary’s;

but the door communicating with the Great Hall has been built up. The windows look to the south,—across the Lothian plain to the Pentlands. I may add that the part of the Castle in which Lethington and the Marian leaders were lodged had been an old palace of the kings of Scotland, and had been occupied by Mary when her son was born.



becometh them rather to make offers to us. If they admit, indeed, that they have gone astray, the noblemen here will concur to provide for their security.

*Mr Craig.* But seeing there is a lawful authority established in the person of the Regent, our duty is to admonish your Lordships to obey the same.

*The Secretar.* I will show you our proceedings from the beginning. There were two reasons that moved the nobility at Carberry Hill : the one was to punish my Lord Bothwell for the King's murder ; the other to dissolve the unhappy marriage between him and the Queen. This is plainly declared in all the proclamations and other writings made at the time. We did not mean to put the Queen out of her office ; had she at once consented to separate herself from Bothwell we should have continued in her obedience. This I told the Queen the night she was brought to Edinburgh. We had hoped that all Scotsmen would have assisted us ; but after Carberry our numbers fell away ; Lord Huntly and many others rose against us—the greater part of the realm. What were we to do ? We required the cloak of some new authority to preserve order in the meantime ; so the King was proclaimed. But it was only a provisional arrangement ; and from the day of the Regent's return,



I constantly urged him to come to a composition with his sister. We were ill-advised, I admit, to proclaim the King; for he never can be justly King as long as his mother liveth. And this is the opinion of all here present.

[At this speech the Lord Duke, Sir James Balfour, and the Captain nodded their heads and confessed that it was the truth.]

*Mr John.* It appears to me that God hath beguiled you, for though He used you as an instrument to set up the King's authority, yet it appears He will not set it down again at your pleasure.

*The Secretar.* How know ye that? Are ye of God's counsel? *Quis fuit consiliarius ejus?* Ye may see the contrary within few days.

*Mr John Winrame.* The argument, my Lord, appeareth very good, that the authority once established by the Estates ought to be obeyed until it is set down again by the same.

*The Secretar.* I marvel that you will say so; for I remember to have heard Mr John Rowe, Mr Willocks, and the rest of you preach concerning Papistrie, that albeit it were established by long continuance and authority of princes, yet should it be violently rejected; and as it came in over the dyke, so should it be shot over the dyke.

*Mr John.* In this your argument, my Lord, I

perceive a paralogisme ; and that by reason there is great difference betwixt religion and matters of policy. For a wicked religion ought incontinently to be rejected. But otherwise is it in the policy, and chiefly in the established authority of kings and princes. And thus we have concluded that the King's established authority should be obeyed.

*Sir James Balfour (interposing).* How know you that it is lawfully established ?

*Mr John.* My Lord, I can well answer that argument, for I was present in the Parliament. If it be true that you are there standing, or that yon little dog is lying in the Secretare's lap (*for a little messan was lying upon his knee*), so is it true that I have said.

*The Secretar (after further argument).* See ye not what these men who are in the Canongate pretend ? Not else, I warrant you, but to rug and reive other men's livings, and to enrich themselves with other men's gear.

*Mr Craig.* Let such things be spoken of them as be yonder, mickle worse is spoken of them that be here.

*The Secretar.* And what is that, Mr Craig ?

*Mr Craig.* My Lord, it is plainly spoken that those who are here travel only to cloak cruel murderers,—the consciences of some of you, indeed, being pricked with the same.

*The Secretar.* Yet, Mr Craig, so long as I was with them, they never accused me of the King's murder, and last year they purged me of it. Yea, to be short with you, so long as I was a pillar to maintain their unjust authority, they never putt at me as they do.

*Mr Craig.* But how will you deny the King's authority, seeing that you have professed the same?

*The Secretar.* The King's authority was set up in respect of the Queen's demission of the crown. How was that demission obtained? Was it made willingly? Lord Lindsay deponed that it was; but when the Regent required him to go to England to testify that the Queen was free at the time, he swore a great oath and said, "My Lord, if ye cause me to go to England with you I will spill the whole matter, for if they accuse me, of my conscience I cannot but confess the truth."<sup>1</sup>

"And thus we took our leave and came away."

<sup>1</sup> Condensed from Bannatyne, 156-68. It is unfortunate that all the reports of the discussions between Maitland and the ministers of the Kirk were prepared by the ministers themselves. They had little difficulty, therefore, in showing that the Secretary was worsted, and that their side came off

with flying colours. Had an indifferent reporter been present the impression produced might possibly have been different; for we can gather, even from their own partial narrative, that Maitland's fence was keen and incisive, and that it required a nimble adversary to parry his attack.

It is a curiously impressive picture,—one that a capable Scottish artist might be tempted to reproduce. The group round the bed—on one side the great nobles who had sworn fealty to Mary, on the other the hard, unsmiling ministers of Knox's Kirk—and in the centre the helpless cripple, who had once "enchanted all the wits of Scotland," and whose "fell tongue" was still quick for jest or gibe or serious repartee, with—*the little dog in his lap.*

When Lethington returned from Athol in the spring of 1571, the capital had not been invested. Communication was still open. A feeble and ill-sustained assault upon the Castle in the autumn of 1570 had been easily repulsed; Lennox had retired disheartened by his failure; and the Captain had taken advantage of the respite to provide for the defence of the town as well as of the Castle. The walls had been strengthened; the gates secured; cannon had been planted at the West Port, at the Black Friars' Yard, and on the steeple of St Giles'; and a sufficient number of trained soldiers had been brought in by Ferniehurst and the Hamiltons to man the works. So that until the Abstinence of August 1572 both town and Castle were in Kirkaldy's keeping, and as most of the citizens who were zealous for the Congregation had betaken themselves to Leith or elsewhere, the capital, from the Castle

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Hill to the Netherbow, was, during these months, exuberantly loyal. It was not till the beginning of 1572 that the Regent's army occupied Leith; and many weeks passed before the communications of the besieged with the surrounding country were effectually interrupted. As late as 10th June 1572, we are told that the horsemen riding round Braid and other places thereabout, brought to the town "forty head of nolt great and small."<sup>1</sup> During the whole of this period several contemporary pens were at work, and many interesting notices of the events that were taking place within and without the walls have been preserved.

The meeting of "the Estates" had long been a popular ceremony, and during a period of intestine strife each party was eager to preserve a show of legal right by holding a Parliament of its own. A peculiar authority was supposed to attach to the acts of a Parliament that met in the metropolis; and the Regent's Lords who assembled in a house in the Canongate adjoining the city wall, "without the gates, yet within the liberties of the town,"<sup>2</sup> assumed that they had complied with this unwritten law of the constitution. They invited Grange to lend them the "honours" for the opening ceremony;

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<sup>1</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents, 300.

<sup>2</sup> Spottiswoode, ii. 157.

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but Grange politely declined,—retaining them for the use of Maitland's Parliament, which was held a few weeks later in the Tolbooth. *Then* they were brought down with great state from the Castle,—Hume bearing the sword, Huntly the sceptre, and the Duke the crown. It was at the Tolbooth Parliament that Mary's letter, in which she declared that in resigning her crown she had done so on the advice of her friends among the Lords who were privy to the extremity intended against her had she refused, and who had counselled her to make no difficulty, "as she tendered her ain life and would eschew present death," was produced.<sup>1</sup> The letter was probably drawn by Maitland, and confirms what is otherwise known, that he was one of the persons who had counselled the Queen to yield, on the ground that an extorted consent had no validity, moral or legal. The main business of the Parliaments was to pass Acts of Attainder,—Maitland and his friends being forfeited by the one, Mar and Morton by the other. But both parties were well aware that the conflict of opinion had reached a stage when it could not be composed by Act of Parliament. It was true then, as it is true now, that the decent fictions of constitu-

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<sup>1</sup> Bannatyne, 222-224.



tional government cannot stand the strain of a profound antipathy. When parties hate each other as Maitland's men hated Morton's, and Morton's Maitland's, the question must be settled outside the House, and with other weapons than words.

Yet even in that age the political satirist was busy at his work. Broadsheets in black-letter were scattered about the streets of the capital. Those that denounced the Queen and the Queen's men came from Robert Lekprevik's press, so long as Lekprevik ventured to remain. When Edinburgh became too hot for him, he took his types to Stirling, and thence to St Andrews. Buchanan's political pamphlets were printed by Lekprevik,—the 'Chamæleon' at Edinburgh, the 'Admonition to the True Lords' at Stirling. Buchanan wrote in prose; but most of the broadsheets were in verse. I presume they were hawked about the country by itinerant vendors, who possibly, in doleful recitative, gave the public a sample of their wares as they passed. The poetry was not of a high order; but it served its purpose. The circumstances attending Darnley's murder could not have been more concisely stated than in 'Ane Trajedy in forme of ane Diallog':—

"Bot of your king, shortly for to declair,—  
Bothwell with pulder blew him in the air  
*At her request.*"

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'The Lamentation of Lady Scotland,' 'The Hail-  
some Admonition,' 'The Tressoun of Dumbar-  
ton,' 'The Siege of the Castle of Edinburgh,'  
belong to the same class. Most of them were  
written in the interest of the Lords, and those  
published after the Castle had fallen were ob-  
viously intended to inflame the populace against  
Maitland,—

“And some said best the Secretar to hang,  
To his illusones we believt ouir lang;”

and to induce the Regent to execute Kirkaldy,—

“Remember Ahab for his feebleness,  
Wha gart King Benhadab in his scherat go,  
Quhilk was his wrack ; bewar ye do not so.”

Tom Truth, on the other hand, was the cham-  
pion of the Queen ; but as the most effective  
satire in prose was written by Thomas Maitland,  
so the most pungent in verse was written by  
John Maitland. His invective upon the sale  
of Northumberland by Morton is touched by a  
passionate bitterness which reflected the popular  
mood. “The traitor that the gude Lord Percy  
sauld” had been false to the laws of Border  
honour,—

“For Scotland aye, of auld or new,  
To banisht wichts was ever true.”

The whole nation would be blamed for the  
shameful deed ; but the guilt was Morton's,—

the Scottish Judas, who, for the blood he had shed, would have a bloody end,—

“Had Christ Himself been in the Percy’s room,  
I wight ye would have playit Judas’ part,  
Gif Cayphas had offert you the sum.”<sup>1</sup>

Though the preachers were still active, as we shall see, the austerities of the puritanic regime had been somewhat mitigated in the capital by Grange and Maitland. It was expedient during a season of trial and privation that the citizens should be occupied and amused; and the old May-day sports and pageants were wisely revived for their benefit. We learn that in spite of the dearth, “they abode patiently and were of good comfort, and usit all pleasures which were wont to be usit in the month of May in auld times, such as Robin Hood and Littlejohn.”<sup>2</sup> The soldiers, though probably a rough lot, were active and zealous, and they had their little jokes, which amused the idlers on the “causey,” and helped to pass the time. When they had planted the ordnance on the steeple of St Giles’, they baptised the big cannon “John Knox.” It was unsafe, however, to indulge in jokes on Knox; the cannon afterwards burst, and killed two of the gunners; “this they got,” Bannatync

<sup>1</sup> Several of these satirical poems are printed in Dalyell’s Collection; the others are in the Record Office.  
<sup>2</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents, 263.

remarks, "for their mockery of God's servants." It was bad enough to laugh at Knox, whose unpopularity, however, with the Castle people we can understand (Bannatyne asserts that he was so detested by them that a soldier from Leith was run upon and wounded simply because he bore the name); but it would appear that even the blameless Richard himself had sometimes been the occasion of unseemly mirth. The St Andrews "post" being in the Castle one day, was asked by Lady Home "gif John Knox was banisht St Andrews, and gif his servant Richard was dead." The postman replied that "he knew no sic thing." But the Lady Home and others, her friends, would take no denial; they "threiped in his face" that Knox had been banished, "because that in the College Yard he had raisit some saints, amongst whom there came up the Devill with horns, which, when his servant Richard saw, he ran wud (mad), and so died."<sup>1</sup> Poor Lady Home! She must have found it rather dull in the Castle, and possibly meant no harm. But Bannatyne was justly offended. "O Lord, hear Thou their blasphemies spoken against Thy servant!" There are some rather happy touches of humour in these little jokes of the "Castillans" which Maitland may have

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<sup>1</sup> Bannatyne, 310.

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enjoyed ; and perhaps, after all, the men were not quite so black as they have been painted ; for even Grange—that star which fell from heaven—though he allowed the citizens to revive their Robin Hoods and Littlejohns and Queens of May, sent them to bed in good time. All the lights in the town, we learn, were out as a rule by nine o'clock. It was a primitive, patriarchal government, and the sumptuary measures which it enforced were not at all in accordance with loose modern ideas.

More than once during these troubled years Scotland was scourged by pestilence. It was the plague of 1568 that drove George Bannatyne, to Meigle (where he wrote out the famous Bannatyne Manuscript); and the striking account in Melville's diary of the deserted streets of the capital during the pest,—“ We rade in at the Netherbow, through the great street of Edinburgh to the West Port, in all whilk way we saw not three persons,”—refers to a later visitation. But if the plague itself was not present, there was much sickness in the beleaguered city, where for several months food and fire were only to be had at famine prices. The general discomfort was increased by the bitter weather ; the winters of 1571, 1572, and 1573 were exceptionally severe,—in each year the snow lay deep till April ; and Grange was latterly obliged to take down the

wooden houses of the citizens who had fled to Leith, and sell the timber for firewood. We learn that the owners, who were naturally disgusted when they returned and found that their property had been appropriated, were among those who afterwards—on the fall of the Castle—were most clamorous for Kirkaldy's execution.

During the whole of the contest, service was celebrated in the great church in the High Street; but Knox had been persuaded to leave the capital; and from May 1571 to August 1572 he resided at St Andrews. The relations of the Kirk with the Castle were somewhat delicate and peculiar. The steeple of St Giles' had been taken possession of by the soldiers; but the preachers were permitted to officiate in the building itself, and—so long, at least, as Knox remained—the violence of their invective against the Queen and the Queen's friends was unmeasured. The patience of the Congregation, it must be confessed, had been sorely tried. One by one their most eminent men had fallen away from them, and the defection of Grange in particular had been bitterly deplored. "To see stars fall from heaven, what godlie heart cannot but lament, tremble, and fear?" The discipline of the infant Church, moreover, had failed to arrest immorality; we learn that in the districts



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where the "professors" were most powerful—in Perth and Aberdeen, for instance—every second or third child was born out of wedlock. Nor was this the worst,—the ministers of the Kirk had been wounded in the house of her friends, and Morton, on whom, among the lay Lords, they mainly depended, treated them as if they had been lackeys. "Dumb dogs," they declared, were suffered by him to mock the ministry of the Word; and when they ventured to remonstrate, he told them curtly that he would stand no nonsense, and that they were "proud knaves" whose pride he would lay. Knox's influence was on the wane; even within the Assembly his authority was no longer absolute. "What I have been to my country," he said bitterly, resenting the disrespect with which he had been treated, "albeit this unthankful age will not know, yet the ages to come will be compelled to bear witness to the truth." He was very lonely at St Andrews, where he appears to have been intensely disliked; for when he left it to return to Edinburgh, he left it, Bannatyne acknowledges, "not without dolour and displeasure of the few godly, but to the great joy and pleasure of the rest." There is reason to believe that he had quarrelled with the professors; at least, when he got back to Edinburgh he was very sarcastic upon those who cultivated "the profane

learning of the Epicureans," and he solemnly warned his friends "to preserve the Kirk from the bondage of the Universities."

The aged Reformer would only return to Edinburgh on condition that he would not be required to "bridle his tongue"; and immediately on his return—"verie weak in bodie, but mightie in spirit"—he took full advantage of the concession. "His threatnings were very sore;" but his voice, which was failing him, had grown too weak for the great church, and a room was provided for him in the Tolbooth, where he continued to denounce Grange and Maitland and the Queen till he was carried home to die. The end was obviously not far off. His "mortal carcass" had become a burden to him. "I thirst to be dissolved from this body of sin."

It is curious that the last public act in which he took part was a controversy with Maitland, in which his unfair and unscrupulous method of dealing with political opponents was characteristically manifested. In point of time it belongs to the next chapter; but it may be convenient to notice it now.

It has been sometimes maintained that Lethington was an unbeliever, and the sentiment that "God is a bogle of the nursery" has been attributed to him. I have been unable to find the words in any contemporary narrative; and

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there is at least negative evidence to show that he did not use them. About the middle of November 1572, Maitland addressed a letter to the Session of Edinburgh in which he complained of the sermon that Knox had preached on the previous Sunday. "It has come to our ears by credible report"—this is the substance of his letter—"that your minister, John Knox, as well publicly in his sermons as otherwise, has slandered me as an atheist, and enemy to all religion; in direct speeches, that I have plainly spoken in the Castle that there is neither heaven nor hell, and that they are things devised to fray bairns, with other sic language, tending to the like effect, unworthy of Christian ears, to be rehearsit in the hearing of men; which words, before God, never at any time proceeded from my mouth, *nor yet any other sounding to the like purpose, nor whereof any sic sentence might be gathered*; for (praised be God) I have been brought up from my youth and instructed in the fear of God, and to know that He has appointed heaven for the habitation of His elect, and also hell for the everlasting dwelling-place of the reprobate. Seeing he has thus ungently used me, and, neglecting his due vocation, the rule of Christian charity, and all good order, has maliciously and untruly lied on me, I crave redress thereof at your hands,"—to the effect that

he should be compelled either to prove his allegations or to withdraw them,—“at least that hereafter ye receive not every word proceeding from his mouth as oracles, but know that he is a man subject to vanity, and that many times does utter his own passions and other men’s inordinate affections in place of true doctrine. It is convenient that ye believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God or not.”

Two or three days after the letter was received, it was read to Knox, who was then on his death-bed. His answer was highly characteristic. The Secretary, he said, had been the chief author of all the mischief done both in England and Scotland. He had troubled his native commonwealth, and the Kirk of God within the same. Was not this manifest proof of what the preacher had alleged? It was to him and to the whole world sufficient declaration that the Secretary denied there was “ony God to punish sic wickedness, or yet ony heaven or hell, wherein virtue shall be rewarded and sin punished,—the workers whereof God would destroy, as might be seen in the ninth Psalm.” It was not education, Knox continued, that made a true Christian, but only illumination of the heart by the Spirit of God; for who was better brought up than Julianus the apostate, and sindrie others? As to the Secretary’s declaration that the preacher was a man

subject to vanity, he could only say that though he was a most vile and wretched creature, yet that the things he had spoken would be found as true as those spoken by the earlier servants of God.<sup>1</sup>

It is obvious that this was no reply; (it did not follow because Maitland had sided with the Queen that he disbelieved in the Deity and in a future state); and we may now hope that "the bogle of the nursery" has been finally laid.

The war was known as the Douglas war, and it got the name on account of the atrocities practised by Morton. Men and women were sent to the shambles like sheep. Quarter was neither asked nor given. Prisoners were shot down, or hanged on the nearest tree. Natural affection was forgotten. "You should have seen fathers against their sons, sons against their fathers, brother fighting against brother."<sup>2</sup> Grange sent a company of soldiers to help Adam Gordon in the north; they were surprised and surrounded by Morton's troopers, and were forced to surrender. "But the horsemen of Leith, after they had received them as prisoners, slew fifteen of the most able and strong men of them; the remainder they drove to Leith like

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<sup>1</sup> Bannatyne, 414-421.

<sup>2</sup> Spottiswoode, ii. 158.

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sheep, stobbing and dunting them with spears, where they were all hanged without further process; and this form of dealing was called the Douglas wars.”<sup>1</sup> The country people who continued to supply the town with provisions were treated with the same barbarous severity. “Upon the 13th day of May there was twa men and ane woman hangit in Wester Edmonstoune, for bringing of leeks and salt to Edinburgh.” The hanging of women, indeed, appears to have been quite a common occurrence. “And when poor women,” Lethington wrote to Mary, “hazarded during the night to bring in some victuals for themselves and their poor bairns, ay as they fell into the hands of their watches, they were hangit without mercy. By that way they have hangit a great number of women, and some of them with bairn, and parted with bairn upon the gallows, a cruelty not heard of in any country.”<sup>2</sup> Morton had set an evil example which the Castle was forced to follow. “They were constraint to do as their enemies does to them.” So, on an eminence beside the town, Grange hanged two of Morton’s men who had been taken; and (one is glad to learn) “gave another his life at the request of the Secretar.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Historie of King James the Sext*, 102. August 1572.

<sup>3</sup> *Diurnal of Occurrents*, 294-

<sup>2</sup> Lethington to Mary, 10th 296.



Bannatyne sums up his account of these atrocities with epigrammatic curtness;—"So there is nothing but hanging on either side."

Thus much for the city; outside the walls disorder was rampant. The houses in the immediate neighbourhood—Craigmillar, Merchiston, Slateford, Redhall, Corstorphine—were garrisoned by the Regent's troops; but they were insufficient to invest the town; and there were constant skirmishes between them and the soldiers of the Castle who were able to run the blockade. From Niddrie to the "drake myre" at Merchiston, the goods of the country people were plundered daily by the ruffians on one side or the other. Lethington was taken and retaken; so was Merchiston; so was Blackness. The experiences of Knox's friend Fairley, the laird of Braid—it was Fairley who persuaded him to leave Edinburgh; it was Fairley to whom he said on his deathbed, "I have been greatly beholden and indebted to you, which I can never be able to recompence you, but I commit you to One who is able to do it, that is, to the eternal God"—have been related by Bannatyne. Braid lay three miles to the south—on the road to the Pentlands; and there was a cross by "Braid's Craigs" which led to Dalkeith. The Reformers did more for the people than the King; but Knox, while visiting his friend

surely sometimes have been struck by the wide and noble view—the towered and castellated ridge, the blue waters of the Firth, the green hills of Fife—on which the windows of the old house looked.<sup>1</sup>

“Friday, the 25th of May, a dozen of soldiers came to Braid at supper-time, and spoiled the miller’s house (the miller being at supper with the Laird); and when they saw the miller coming in and staying them from spoiling his house, took him and brought him to the yeat of Braid, and gave the Laird injurious words, bidding him come out to Captain Melville, or else they should burn the house about his lugs. The Laird, being a quiet man, bade them depart, saying that he had nothing to do with them. They still continuing in their injurious words, and misusing the Laird’s miller before his eyes, the Laird went forth with a two-handed sword (the rest of his household accidentally detained followed as they might); the soldiers or the most part of them discharges their hagbriteris at the Laird, but by God’s providence he escaped their fury, and straik ane of them braidlings with his sword to the earth, wha cried that he would

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<sup>1</sup> It is much to be regretted that the picturesque slopes to the south of Edinburgh have been, or are being, defaced by the speculative builder. The right to protect the amenity of a great city should be vested in some responsible authority.

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be taken. Other two of them having their pieces undischarged (in one of them there was three bullets), and seeing one of their marrows dung to the ground, they discharge baith at the Laird; yet by God's eternal providence he was so preservit that he got no hurt, nor none of his, albeith they were all without armour; but the skaith fell upon themselves, for they slew their ain man that had rendered himself to the Laird; and so the soldiers when they had discharged their pieces fled to the town, and made report that the Laird of Braid had a company of men of war waiting them. So the alarm struck, and all came forth to the Querrel Holes, but hearing the truth were stayed by the Laird of Merchiston, who shewed Captain Melville that there were other men coming from Dalkeith for the Laird's relief, as that they did with speed."<sup>1</sup>

Similar scenes were enacted all over the country. At Brechin, thirty or more of the Queen's men—taken by Lennox—"danced their fill in cords." When the Castle of Dumbarton was surprised, the Archbishop of St Andrews was discovered among the prisoners. Lennox—his old enemy—gave him short shrift. Three days after he was taken he was hanged at

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<sup>1</sup> Bannatyne, 174.

Stirling,—“as the bell struck at 6 hours at even.” The ferocious jocularly of the enemy who attached these lines to the gibbet—

“Cresce diu felix arbor, semperque vireto  
Frondebis, et nobis talia poma feras”—

was highly characteristic of the time. “And that same nicht this other verse, as ane antidote to the first, was affixt upon the kirk door, and divers other remarkable parts of the town—

“‘In felix pereas arbor, si forte virebis  
Imprimis utinam carminis author eas.’”<sup>1</sup>

The death of the great churchman “remainit not long unrevenged.” The Archbishop was hanged in April; the Black Parliament, as it was called—the Parliament of which the boy-King had said, pointing to the roof, “There is ane hole in this Parliament”—met at Stirling in September. Lennox was there, and Morton and Glencairn, and half the Lords of Scotland. A daring and brilliant exploit was devised by Maitland, which might have changed the whole future of the war. Under cover of night, a hundred or two of the Castle garrison stole out of the town, and rode swiftly to Stirling, which they reached before dawn. The surprise for a time was complete,—Lennox, Morton, Glencairn, and the rest

<sup>1</sup> *Historie of King James the Sext*, 72.



were taken in their beds. By five o'clock the victorious slogan of the Borderers was ringing through the streets: *God and the Queen; ane Hamilton; think on the Bishop of St Andrews; all is ours.* And but for the Border greed, all would have been theirs. The Scotts and the Kers, however, felt that such a providential opportunity was not to be neglected; and while they were engaged in spoiling the goods of the citizens, the Regent's retainers rallied. The enterprise failed; but the Bishop was avenged; for in the pursuit Lennox was shot through the body, and died the same night. Maitland was bitterly mortified by the miscarriage,—as he told Drury, a great enterprise had been lost by negligence.<sup>1</sup> A little later Adam Gordon, who had reduced all the country beyond the Dee to the Queen's obedience, very nearly succeeded in a similar adventure. The Earls of Crawford and Buchan, the Lord Glamis, and the Master of Marischal were assembling their forces in Brechin, when Gordon, surprising the watch that guarded the bridge across the South Esk, surrounded the houses in which the Lords were lodged. It was found, however, that they had managed to make good their escape; roused by note of bugle or bagpipe, they had hastily left the town—not a

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<sup>1</sup> Thorpe, 326.

moment too soon. Many of their retainers were slain.<sup>1</sup>

A very considerable number of Lethington's letters written from the Castle have been preserved, and during the same period the envoys accredited by Elizabeth had frequent interviews with him. I am not concerned to maintain that his schemes for composing the Scottish troubles were always identical; they varied more or less according to the pressure of events, and the moods and humours of the English Queen. The English envoys were very outspoken; they had little love for the leaders of the party to which they were accredited, and Lennox in particular they regarded with unconcealed contempt. "Money is the man in Scotland," Drury said after an interview with Morton; "the Scots never keep any promise longer than it suits their turn," was the verdict of Hunsdon.<sup>2</sup> But they had—one and all—profound respect and real liking for Lethington, and more than once they were forced to admit that his proposals were not unreasonable. While Maitland was not prepared to acknowledge the Regent or to yield the Castle, he was ready to give way in everything that was not essential, and to com-

<sup>1</sup> Spottiswoode, ii. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Drury to Burleigh, 14th September 1571. Hunsdon

to Elizabeth, 29th September 1571.



mit the settlement of the controversy to "a neutral and indifferent Government," or within certain limits to Elizabeth herself. He saw no particular reason, he said, why the English Queen should insist on one form of administration in Scotland rather than another; he thought his own plan quite as likely to preserve the amity between the kingdoms; but he would "leave a large field for her Majesty to walk in at her pleasure,—it being too narrow a close that hath but one outgait."<sup>1</sup> If Mar (who succeeded Lennox) had been allowed to use his own judgment, he would have acceded to terms which were favourably regarded by Elizabeth; but Morton was behind him, and Morton would listen to no overture for peace. Drury assured Burleigh in October—Sir William Cecil had been Lord Burleigh since the spring of the year<sup>2</sup>—that the Regent would be well content that the troubles were ended; but, he added, "Morton rules all, and will not consent that the Queen's party should be treated with at all."<sup>3</sup> Morton's was a policy of extermination, and it was carried out,—as we have seen—to the letter, and—as we shall see—to the bitter end.

<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Hunsdon, 24th November 1571. | Burleigh 25th February 1571.

<sup>3</sup> Drury to Burleigh, 27th

<sup>2</sup> Cecil was created Lord | October 1571.

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The contest between the two parties might have been indefinitely prolonged; but in July 1572, on the urgent representations of Elizabeth, an Abstinence was agreed to. It lasted from the 1st of August 1572 to the 1st of January 1573.

## CHAPTER FOUR.

### THE FALL OF THE CASTLE.

THE Abstinence, for those in the Castle, was a fatal blunder. So long as the capital was in their hands they had breathing-room. It was an easy matter to invest the Castle; it was wellnigh impracticable, for any force that Morton could raise, to invest the city. The moment that the truce was signed the discontented citizens flocked back from Leith. They were incensed by the loss of their property, and they were furious against Grange and Maitland. Knox also returned, and, as we have seen, his threatenings were very sore. The moral effect upon the spirits of the besieged was bad. A hostile city was at their feet, in which, by shrill and clamorous tongues, their evil deeds were denounced. Then there was fresh opportunity for intrigue. The highest noble in Scotland was never inaccessible to a bribe; and the agents who had been despatched by Cecil were lavish

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of promises. Pensions were granted with unheard-of liberality; the tightly drawn strings of Elizabeth's purse were for once unloosed. The disintegrating forces, in short, were everywhere at work, and before the close of the armistice the English envoys were able to assure their mistress that the war was virtually at an end.

Within a day or two, Lethington realised that a grave mistake had been made. At the very moment when Gordon in the north, Ferniehurst in the south, and the loyalists of the west were carrying all before them, their progress had been arrested by the truce. He felt that he had been unwise and precipitate. He was unusually depressed when, on the tenth day of the Abstinence, he wrote to Mary. The armistice, he informed her, had been accompanied by most "disadvantageous conditions" for them, seeing they had been forced to make the town "patent" to the enemy. "Your Majesty," he continued, "must provide some way for the safety and furnishing of the Castle of Edinburgh, for it is the mark our adversaries always shoot at, and they will spare nothing, either by might or slight, to come by it; for they have experience whereof it may serve, and that it is aye able to cast the ball, as indeed it had put this matter lang syne out of play, gif France had played her part. We shall provide for the safety of

it as weil as we may, but it will be baith costly and cumbersome ; and will require far more expenses now, when our enemies have the town at their devotion, nor it did before. It will not be a small thing will serve that turn, and therefore your Majesty must with diligence provide a relief for it, and cause money be sent to victual it for a year at least, and furnish it with all provision necessary, as also to maintain the garrison ; for so long as the Castle is preserved the cause will not perish. I refer the rest to your Majesty's discretion. God knows what burden we have borne, for the furnishing of all the charges of this war has lain solely on our own shoulders, whereby we have beggared ourselves and all the friends we had credit of." <sup>1</sup>

The cause of Mary had been hurt by the Abstinence ; but the Massacre of St Bartholomew inflicted a wound from which it never recovered. The news of the bloody festival that had been held in the capital of France was received in Edinburgh a day or two after Knox's return, and it furnished him with a text for a discourse which curdled the blood of his hearers. Politic heads had mocked him : but he had been right after all ; *this* was what Catholicism had come to ; and Grange and Maitland and the rest of

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Mary, 10th August 1572.

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them might lay the lesson to heart. He told the French ambassador to warn "that murderer his master" that sentence had been pronounced against him; that God's vengeance "shall never depart from him nor his house, but that the same shall remain an execration unto the posterities to come, and that nane that shall come of his loins shall enjoy the kingdom in peace and quietness, unless repentance prevent God's judgments."<sup>1</sup>

This was the last flicker of the flame; a week or two thereafter Knox took to his bed, and he died on the 24th of November. A Convention of all the Reformed Kirks within the realm, to consider how they could protect themselves against the "great murders and mair than beastly cruelties of the bloody and treasonable Papists," and from the decrees of the "devilish and terrible Council of Trent," had been called by the Privy Council for the 20th October; but it does not appear that Knox was present at the meeting. His thoughts in these last days turned again to the men in the Castle, one of whom he "had loved so dearly." He had told his hearers months before at St Andrews that the Castle of Edinburgh would "rin like a sand-glass"; that it would "spew out the Captain with shame"; that Grange would leave it not through the gate,

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<sup>1</sup> Bannatyne, 402.



but over the wall. Now from his sickbed he sent a parting message to Kirkaldy,—which was brought to the Castle by Mr David Lindsay, the minister of Leith ;—“ ‘ Go, I pray, and tell him that I have sent you to him once more to warn and bid him, in the name of God, leave that evil cause, and give over that Castle ; gif he will not, he shall be brought down over the walls of it with shame, and hing against the sun ; so God has assurit me.’ Mr David, howbeit he thought the message hard and the threatenng over particular, yet obeyed, and past to the Castle, and meeting with Sir Robert Melville walking on the wall, told him ; wha was, as he thought, mickle movit with the matter. Thereafter he communed with the Captain, whom he thought also somewhat movit ; but he passed from him to the Secretary Lethington, with whom, when he had conferred a while, he came out to Mr David again, and said to him, ‘ Go, tell Mr Knox he is but a drytting prophet !’ Mr David, returning, told Mr Knox he had discharged the commission faithfully ; but that it was nocht weill accepted of, after the Captain had conferred with the Secretary. ‘ Weill,’ says Mr Knox, ‘ I have been earnest with my God anent they twa men ; for the ane I am sorry that so it should befall him, yet God assures me that there is mercy for his soul ; for that uther

I haif na warrand that ever he sal be weill.' Mr David says he thought it hard, yet keipit it in mind till Mr Knox was at rest with God."<sup>1</sup>

They had come to the last act of the play. Neither Knox nor Maitland was long for this world. But the characteristics of the two men are carefully preserved in the closing scene,—each is consistent, logical, to the end. Maitland continued to scoff as he had scoffed from the beginning at the spiritual thunders of the Kirk,—Knox was but a “drytting prophet”; while Knox, in the exercise of “a commission man cannot limitate,” declared the judgment of the Almighty. “I haif na warrand that ever he sal be weill.”

Knox died about “eleven hours at even” on the day that Morton was made Regent. Morton, as we have seen, had long been the ruling spirit of the faction opposed to Mary; and when, on Mar's sudden death, the highest place in Scotland became vacant once more, it was immediately recognised that, among the King's men, Morton was the only possible candidate.<sup>2</sup> On his election, any hope of peaceful adjustment had to be renounced. Neither Maitland nor Kirkaldy could venture to treat, as they said, with their most bitter enemy; and Morton's policy was

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<sup>1</sup> Melville's *Autobiography*, | <sup>2</sup> There was, however, some  
34. | talk of Argyll.

summed up in the brief but comprehensive formula—"Hang them all."

The Abstinence, the "tragic nuptials" at Paris, and Morton's election, were the beginning of the end. On the 1st of January, before the citizens were out of bed, a warning gun from the Castle announced that the truce was over. Measures had been already taken by the Regent, notwithstanding the armistice, to hem the Castle people in. "A fortress and bulwark had been erected before the face of the Tolbooth that looked to the Castle, in the strait passage opposite the goldsmiths' shops; and another in the strait passage opposite the north door of the Capital Kirk."<sup>1</sup> The Castle was now closely invested, and the isolation of the defenders was complete. Outside the walls, as I have said, intrigue had been at work; and the siege had hardly recommenced before it was found that the great Lords who had hitherto supported Mary—Huntly, Hamilton, and the others—were willing to come to terms. Maitland addressed a passionate remonstrance to Huntly (Elizabeth, he said, would be afraid to meddle, and aid was on its way from France);<sup>2</sup> but Huntly had made up his mind to go with the rest, and the agreement known as the Pacification of Perth—23d

<sup>1</sup> Historie of King James the  
Sext, 125.

<sup>2</sup> Maitland to Huntly, 23d  
February 1573.

February 1573 — was accepted with practical unanimity.<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth still wavered at times ; but the negotiations with Morton for the judicial murder of Mary were progressing satisfactorily, and she was coming to feel that the unscrupulous Douglas was an invaluable ally. Blunt and insolent by nature, he was her humble servant, and his singular fidelity to the English alliance deserved to be rewarded. The year 1573 was yet young when, yielding to the steady pressure that was brought to bear upon her by her own ministers—by Burleigh, Drury, Randolph, and Killigrew—she gave instructions for the movement of the army across the Border. The defences of the Castle had been surreptitiously examined by English experts during the truce, and it had been ascertained that the cannon at Berwick might be trusted in the course of a few days to silence “ muckle-mou’d Meg ” and her sisters.

The letters of the English agents are filled with complaints of Lethington’s “ obstinacy ” at this supreme moment. There was still time to save him if he would only consent to accept the inevitable. “ The flower of the wits of Scotland ” was held in high esteem to the last by Elizabeth and her Ministers ; and they were, I believe, sincerely anxious to save him. It was a thou-

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<sup>1</sup> Register of Privy Council, ii. 193.

sand pities that a statesman and scholar who had shone at Greenwich and Westminster should perish in an obscure brawl, in a desperate cause. But Lethington pertinaciously refused to admit that it was desperate. A physician never despairs of his patient; his motto is that while there is life there is hope. And to a certain extent Maitland's "obstinacy" may be justified. He was the last stay of Mary Stuart. If the Castle capitulated there would be an end of the conflict. The Castle, he was confident, could not be taken except by the English cannon. But was Elizabeth willing to enter on an adventure which would expose her to the resentment of the Catholic Princes, which would be denounced as a fresh violation of international comity, which would cost lives and money? She had, as is known, encouraged him to believe that she would not; and he did not believe that she would. So long then as the Castle held out, Mary's chances were nearly as good as they had been at any time for eighteen months. No one could tell what a day might bring forth. Elizabeth might die—might go *ad Patres*, as he said; the French troops might land at Leith; Philip might be won over; Huntly and Chatelherault and Argyll might fall away from the Regent; the Pacification of Perth would hardly stand the wear and tear of a protracted struggle, and the

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Queen's friends, the moment they found that Morton's plans had miscarried, would gladly return. When, indeed, the English troops were once across the Border, he knew, he must have known, that the game was up. But even then, was it worth his while to own that he was beaten? He would be loyal to the last; neither threat nor bribe would shake his fidelity to his lawful Sovereign; if the worst came to the worst he could only die, and he was already on his deathbed. Upon the whole, it seems to me that he was well advised to act as he did, and to separate himself by a declaration that could admit of no misconstruction from the faint-hearted friends who had deserted their mistress.

Maitland, indeed, had latterly told Mary more than once that she should make what terms she could with Elizabeth. It was his duty to conceal nothing from her, and to advise her to the best of his ability. "I would wish your Majesty, seeing how slack a part France has tane with you, should essay yet by all means gif ye may win the Queen of England, for I see not by what other means your relief can be wrought, and, it may be, gif ye make her good offers, she will now show you more favour than when you had more friends."<sup>1</sup> When he wrote this letter he was the

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland to Mary, 10th August 1572.



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victim of no illusion; he felt that the ground was giving way under his feet; and that he ought to let her know the worst. But none the less he was bound in honour to be true to her flag until she was willing to release him. When he found that no terms had been made with her, and that Elizabeth and Morton on the contrary were scheming to put her to death with such farce of judicial forms as might satisfy the scrupulous and silence the timid, it was hardly possible for Maitland to take any other course than he took. Even if escape for himself were possible, he was bound to remain where he was; it was his duty to go down with the ship.

Once more, however, it was proved that, without the aid of England, the whole force of Puritan Scotland was powerless against the Castle. The Castle had been closely invested since the first day of the year; but by the end of April no progress had been made, and Mary Stuart's flag still floated from St David's Tower.<sup>1</sup> The garrison were provisioned for a siege; and if only their water held out, and the English cannon could be detained at Berwick, there seemed no reason to despair. "The Scots can scale no walls," had

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<sup>1</sup> "But in the meantime, a banner of red colour, denouncing war and defiance, was set upon the chief tower of the Castle, callit King David's Tower."—King James the Sext, 142.

been said years before; and the walls of Edinburgh Castle crowned an inaccessible precipice.

I have said that there could be no treaty between Maitland and Morton; yet it appears that during the autumn of 1572, when the Earl was seriously, if not dangerously ill, some attempt to arrive at an understanding had been made. "Since God has visited baith him and me with corporal diseases, and little likelihood that ever we shall meet face to face," Maitland desired his cousin the Laird of Carmichael, to see the Earl and recall to his mind the old familiarity that had been between them. "Since the indisposition of my person will not suffer me, I will pray my cousin to desire him in my name to call to his remembrance what friendship has been of auld between him and me; what good offices I have done to him, and how my credit with the Queen has many times served him, as well in advancing him to honour and reputation in the country, as in settling him and those dearest to him in the security of their livings. I trow he will confess that by my labours only he was made Chancellor, when the Earl of Moray was bent to purchase the office for his gud-father the Lord Marischal. I think also he will acknowledge that I was the chief instrument to obtain the Queen's consent, and that specially by my credit the security was purchased of both the

houses of Angus and Morton. I need not repeat the good part I kept to him during his trouble ; what danger in many ways I thereby incurred. This is known to few so well as to himself ; he knows in his conscience that he never received so many good turns at any one man's hand, and that all that I did was out of kindness only, and not for his gear."<sup>1</sup> This last effort at a friendly understanding failed ; it was made in good faith by Maitland—who had heard that the Regent was dying ; but Morton on his recovery returned an ungracious answer. Had they been brought together at that time, it is just possible that some provisional *modus vivendi* might have been devised. But it must be frankly admitted that peace on any terms was almost hopeless. The gulf that separated the two men was really impassable. It was with difficulty that Morton was brought to agree to the Pacification of Perth, and Maitland declared that the conditions of the Pacification were shameful. In Maitland's view, indeed, it was an ignominious capitulation, to which no true friend of Mary—except in the last extremity—could consent.

The English army arrived at Edinburgh on the 25th of April ; the heavy guns were disembarked at Leith on the 26th ; and in the course of a few

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<sup>1</sup> Bannatyne, 474.

days thereafter the ordnance was in position. "Upon the 12th, 13th, and 14th days of May, in the night, the artillery of England was placed about the Castle of Edinburgh for the siege in this manner. On the north side of Mr John Thornton's lodging on the Castle Hill lay the cannon royal, and two other cannons; on the crofts of the Grey Friars lay three great culverin; at the Scots crofts lay six great culverin; above the west side of St Cuthbert's Kirk lay two Scottish iron pieces; at the north side two Scots great culverins, and my Lord Argyle's cannon, with four pott pieces; at the lang gait on the east side of the said pot pieces lay three small pieces, with strong and deep trenches in all parts." From this account, as well as from that which is contained in 'Birrel's Diarey,' it would appear that the Castle was entirely surrounded. There were twenty great pieces, Birrel says, "stellit" at four different places,—five on the Castle Hill, five at the Greyfriars' churchyard, five near the West Port, and the other five beyond the Nor' Loch.

The siege lasted for nearly a month; the defence was stubborn; more than once the Castle cannon tore up the trenches, and dismounted the guns that were being placed;<sup>2</sup> but the fire

<sup>1</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents, 331.  
Birrel's Diarey, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Holinshed's Chronicle, i.  
412.

of the English artillery, when once in position, quickly asserted its superiority, and the walls began to crumble into ruin. Then a spring of fresh water, to which the garrison trusted, was cut off;<sup>1</sup> and the soldiers, who, according to Melville, had been tampered with by the Regent, began to murmur at the obstinacy of their leaders. It was necessary to come to terms; and on the night of the 29th May, Grange and Maitland and Home and Melville surrendered unconditionally to the English General. When they had been removed, the Castle was occupied by the Regent's soldiers.

Maitland and Grange expected to be treated as prisoners of war; but they had fallen into the hands of a ruthless enemy. They were in the meantime, no doubt, the guests of the English General, and in a letter to Elizabeth they strongly insisted that she was bound in honour to save them from the tender mercies of Morton. But

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<sup>1</sup> I am given to understand that only one spring of water on the rock is now known. From Holinshed's account, the garrison in 1573 must have had access to others. "They were deprived of water because the well within the Castle was choked with the ruins of the Castle walls; and the other well without could not serve them, because there was a mount made to hinder them. Another water there was (which was unknown to such as were without the Castle), and was taken from them by the loss of the spur, out of which they were wont to have a pint a day for every soldier."—Holinshed's Chronicle, i. 413.



though the Castle had been taken by her own troops, and though, by the usage of war, they were entitled to her protection, she could not resist the importunities of the Regent. Drury was directed to deliver them over to a man from whom no mercy was to be looked for.

This was Maitland's last letter to Cecil :—

The malice of his enemies had been the more increased against him because he had rendered himself to her Majesty, and now sought refuge at her hands. But whatever their malice might be he did not fear that it would take effect; for he knew with how gracious a princess he had to do, and he could not mistrust her clemency. He took it that *Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos*, was the motto that she affected. He and Grange had rendered themselves to her Majesty, which to Morton they would never have done whatever their extremity. They did not believe that she would return them into the hands of their mortal enemies. If her clemency were extended to them, she would have them perpetually at her devotion. They were now of small value, but perhaps hereafter they might be able to do her some service. Cecil, they were confident, would further their request. At no time had his friendship been more necessary to them, and they trusted that in their extremity, when they had more need of



it than ever they had, they could rely on his good offices.<sup>1</sup>

Grange and Maitland had been brought down from the Castle through a disorderly crowd. The mob, according to Melville, was mainly composed of the citizens opposed to Mary whose property had been confiscated during the siege. "My brother, Sir Robert, lay with me at his own lodgings; the Laird of Grange and Secretary Ledingtoun, for their greater security, remained with the Marshal of Berwick (at Leith), because that the people of the town of Edinburgh were greatly their enemies. For except a few that tarried within the town, the most part of the richest men and merchants left and went to Leith to take part with the Regent, therefore their houses were spoiled, upon which account they did bear great hatred to those in the Castle."<sup>2</sup> Such a crowd was of course bitterly hostile to the Marian leaders, and might easily have been induced to resort to acts of violence. We learn from a contemporary satire that, as they passed down the Castle Hill, the rabble pressed round the escort and jeered at the prisoners. "Whare are they? Let us see the louns. Go to, and staen them. Let them tak na rest." In the

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<sup>1</sup> Maitland and Grange to  
Burleigh, 1st June 1573 (Cotton).

<sup>2</sup> Melville, 121.

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same broadsheet (which was mainly directed against Kirkaldy—urging his execution) the people were reminded that the prophecy of Knox had been fulfilled :—

“Then was compleit the prophecy of Knox,  
Doun fra that Craig Kirkaldy sal reiteir  
With shame and slander like ane hunted fox.”

Wherever hanging was needed, Morton might be trusted to do his duty; but when he sent Grange to the scaffold he could not perhaps help himself. The ministers of the Kirk were resolved that Knox's vaticinations should come true to the letter. So they clamoured for his execution; and Morton for once was willing to oblige them.<sup>1</sup> “Mr David, the morn by nine hours, comes again to the Captain and resolves him that it behoved him to suffer. ‘O then, Mr David,’ says he, ‘for our auld friendship and for Christ's sake leave me not!’ So he remains with him, who pacing up and down a while, and seeing the day fair, the sun clear, and a scaffold preparing at the Cross in the High Gate, he falls in a great study, and alters countenance and colour; which, when Mr David perceived, he came to him, and

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<sup>1</sup> Had it not been for the ministers, however, it is probable that Morton's avarice would have saved Kirkaldy. See his letter to Killigrew

(5th August 1573), in which he says that he had refused the bribe, “considering what has been, and daily is, spoken by the preachers, &c.”

asked him what he was doing? 'Faith, Mr David,' says he, 'I perceive well now that Mr Knox was the true servant of God, and his threatenng is to be accomplished;' and desired to hear the truth of it again. The which Mr David rehearsed, and thereupon he was greatly comforted, and began to be of good and cheerful courage. In the end he beseeches Mr David not to leave him, but to convoy him to the place of execution. 'And take heed,' says he, 'I hope in God, after I shall be thought past, to give you a token of the assurance of mercy to my soul, according to the speaking of the man of God.' So about three hours after noon, he was brought out, and Mr David with him; and about four, the sun being about west of the north-west neuk of the steeple, he was put off the ladder, and his face first fell to the east; but within a bonnie while turned about to the west, and there remained against the sun; At which time Mr David, ever present, says he marked him, when all thought he was away, to lift up his hands that were bound before him, and lay them down again softly; which moved him with exclamation to glorify God before all the people."<sup>1</sup>

It was a cruel deed; and the historians of a milder age may be permitted to regret that the

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<sup>1</sup> Melville's Autobiography, 35.

vindication of Knox's prophetic faculty involved the extinction on the scaffold in the High Street of a heroic and blameless life. The game, moreover, was hardly worth the candle. Quite a minor prophet might have been warranted to predict that, in a turbulent and distracted country, the man who had incurred the hatred of Morton would not die in his bed. Happily the kirkmen were satisfied,—Knox's omniscience, they held, had been authoritatively, if not conclusively, established.

“Thus we play the fools with the time, and the spirits of the wise sit in the clouds and mock us.” The follies of our forefathers have become remote and incredible fictions at which we can afford to smile. But it is just possible that to those who occupy “the orchestra and noblest seats of heaven” the comedy of the Present may be not less mirth-provoking than the comedy of the Past. Knox may have been a “drytting prophet”; but are the prophets in whom we trust a whit more respectable? On the other hand, we may perhaps venture to hope that our foolishness is more innocent than theirs, inasmuch as it is not inspired by the mad fury of fanaticism nor attended by wilful cruelty.

Maitland would have gone the same road as Grange—had he lived. But when he was brought down from the Castle he was in the

last stage of a deadly disease, and his strength was gone. He died about a week after the Castle fell,—though the exact day has not been determined.<sup>1</sup> The usual rumours of foul play were current; but there is really no reason whatever for holding that poison was administered to him—either by himself or by others. Melville, indeed, remarks that “Secretary Lethington died at Leith, after the old Roman fashion, *as was said*, to prevent his coming to the shambles with the rest;” and Killigrew reported to Cecil that Maitland was dead (though for his own part he was able to say nothing as to the manner of his death), “not without suspicion of poison.”<sup>2</sup> But (though the rumour that he had been poisoned by Morton reached Mary) the best informed believed that the shock of a crowning disaster had proved too much for his enfeebled body. He died of “an auld disease of the impotence of his legs,”<sup>3</sup>—the paralysis which had made him a helpless cripple; but the fall of the Castle and the ignominy of defeat no doubt hastened his end. “Lidington is dead from his natural sickness, being also stricken with great melancholy which he conceived of the hatred

<sup>1</sup> The author of the ‘Diurnal’ states that he died on 9th June; but it appears more probable that he died on the

7th.

<sup>2</sup> Killigrew, 12th June 1573.

<sup>3</sup> Historie of King James the Sext, 144.

that he did see all his countrymen bear towards him since he came out of the Castle, in such sort as Sir William Drury was forced to keep a strong guard to save him in his own lodging from the fury of the people.”<sup>1</sup> This was written by Lord Burleigh on 14th June, and Lord Burleigh had no doubt received the particulars from Drury himself. Drury’s letter, unfortunately, has not been preserved.<sup>2</sup>

Maitland’s body, according to the barbarous usage of Scotland in such cases, was left unburied. The English General reported to Burleigh on 18th June that he had been pressed by the Earl of Athol and others “that the body of Lidington might be buried, and not remain above the earth as it does;” and two days later Mary Fleming addressed a touching appeal to the English Minister. The cause of the widow and orphan, she said, was in the hand of Almighty God; but her husband had always reposed such confidence in Cecil that the desolate wife would venture to address him. Would he move his mistress to write to the Regent that the body of her husband, which when alive had not been spared in the service of her Highness, might now, after his death, receive no shame or

<sup>1</sup> Burleigh to Shrewsbury, 14th June 1573.

<sup>2</sup> I am informed by the com-

pilers of the Hatfield Calendar that it has not been recovered.



ignominy, and that the heritage secured long since to herself and her children might be restored to them?<sup>1</sup> Morton, or whoever was responsible, must have disregarded her entreaties; and it was not until Elizabeth had warned him very sharply that the usage of Scotland was a disgrace to a civilised people, that the remains of the great statesman were decently interred.

His children—he had a son and daughter by Mary Fleming—were declared incapable of holding land in Scotland; and it was not until 1584 that the disability was removed. A rehabilitation under the Great Seal was granted to his heirs on the 19th February of that year. His son James, a Roman Catholic, sold the estate of Lethington to John Maitland, the Chancellor, and appears to have lived mainly abroad. Long afterwards—8th June 1620—we find him expostulating with Camden upon certain passages in the ‘Annals’ which reflected injuriously, as he thought, upon his father. (Yet Lethington was one of Camden’s favourite statesmen,—one of the heroes of the Reformation; “*Vir inter Scotos maximo rerum usu, et ingenio splendidissimo, si minus versatili.*”) His daughter Margaret married Robert Ker of Cessford, who in course of time became the first Earl of Roxburghe.

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Maitland to Burleigh, 21st June 1573 (Cotton).

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Kirkaldy's daughter Janet had been married in 1561 to Thomas Ker of Ferniehurst. There was thus a close connection by marriage between the "men in the Castle" and the two great Border houses, which are still represented in the Scottish peerage by the Dukedom of Roxburghe and the Marquisate of Lothian.

With the fall of the Castle, with the death of Maitland, a chapter of history closes. Mary had said, in her own graceful way,—“*Ayez memoire de l'ame et de l'honneur de celle qui a esté votre royne ;*” and in many a Scottish household, as the years went by, the memory of the queenly woman who had been their Queen (*O Dea certe !*)<sup>1</sup> was cherished with growing ardour. But of Mary Stuart, as a serious political force in Scotland which had to be reckoned with by statesmen, there was thenceforth an end. Of Lethington himself little more need be added. He had many faults ; but these have been absurdly caricatured by malice and ignorance. I do not think that it is fair to say that he was false to Mary of Lorraine, that he was false to the Lords of the Congregation, that he was false to Mary Stuart, that he was false to her brother and to

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<sup>1</sup> It was Brantome who declared that Mary had the air, the distinction of an authentic goddess, — the carriage of the Virgilian *vera Dea*.

her son. I am not convinced that he was the accomplice of Morton when Rizzio was slain, or the accomplice of Bothwell when Darnley was murdered. He did not undervalue the Reformation; but he valued it as it was valued by Erasmus, not as it was valued by Calvin. He was a skilful ruler, an adroit and persuasive diplomatist; but he was more; he was a proud and patriotic Scotsman, and the dream of his life—the mark at which he always shot—was the union of the kingdoms under a Scottish prince.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot conclude this volume without thanking Mr Froude, Sir Theodore Martin, and other friends, for the assistance they have kindly rendered me. The occasional notices of Lethington that occur in Mr Froude's great history are as just and discriminating as they are brilliant; and his suggestions have been extremely valuable. It is a real pleasure to me to remember that, though we have been often in sharp collision on many vital questions connected with the Marian period, a friendship of thirty years has never been interrupted for an hour.

I may mention here, what I omitted to mention at its proper place, that Sir Walter Scott's specific statement that prepara-

tion had been made by Moray to capture Mary and Darnley as they rode from Perth in the summer of 1565,—“a body of horse was for this purpose stationed at a pass under the hill of Benarty, called the Parrot-Well,”—is confirmed by, and was probably derived from, the local tradition of the district. Sir Walter was well acquainted with Kinross-shire, to which during many years he paid an annual visit as the guest of his friend, the Chief Commissioner Adam. My grandfather, who was the resident Sheriff at Kinross, and a famous angler on Loch Leven before Loch Leven was famous, used frequently to meet him at Blairadam, where Sir Walter, leaning across the dinner-table, in accordance with

Lethington did not succeed ; his policy failed disastrously ; he was driven to an ignominious surrender, and he died a miserable death. Faticism, it must be admitted, has compensations of its own. The zealot on the cross can look forward to the crown,—passing, as the greatest of our poets has phrased it,

“ Through the brief minute’s fierce annoy  
To God’s eternity of joy.”

But Maitland had little to look forward to in this world or the next ; neither the spiritual consolations nor the posthumous prizes of the martyr, whose praise is in all the Churches, were, or could be, his. He was not sustained by pious enthusiasm, or the ardent idealism of faith. He knew that he would be defamed by the bigots who were to write the annals of the Kirk ; he could have no confident assurance that the vigilance of later historians might be trusted to reverse an ungenerous and partial verdict. Yet he preserved to the end (though he was dying by inches) his serenity, his alertness, his high spirit, his sportive humour, his mental balance, his intel-

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the fashion of the time, would address him in words which became familiar in after years to a younger generation (for to my grandfather Sir Walter was the first of men, and every reminiscence memorable): “ Would the Shirra of the Loch take a glass of wine with the Shirra of the Forest ? ”

lectual intrepidity and incisiveness, his devotion to his mistress, his loyalty to his Queen. Of Maitland, as of Van Arteveldt, it might be said with perfect appropriateness,—

“ Dire rebel though he was,  
 Yet with a noble nature and great gifts  
 Was he endowed—courage, discretion, wit  
 An equal temper and an ample soul,  
 Rock-bound and fortified against assaults  
 Of transitory passion, but below  
 Built on a surging subterranean fire,  
 That stirred and lifted him to high attempts.  
 So prompt and capable and yet so calm.”

He failed; and yet in a sense he succeeded. Though he was not permitted to enter into the promised land, he was one of the pioneers who paved the way to Union. The difficulties were enormous; but the impulse which he communicated was never entirely lost;—“*Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum, Tendimus in Latium.*” Nor must it be forgotten that it is the impress of men like Maitland—not the impress of men like Knox—that has made this nation what it is. Knox, could he have had his way, would have revived the classical republic or the oriental theocracy. The provincial narrowness and fierce intolerance of the Congregation were not compatible with the maintenance of individual rights and the discharge of imperial obligations, with political

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moderation and sober freedom. It was the consistent application of the rational principles of civil and ecclesiastical government that are identified with statesmen and churchmen of the Maitland type, which gave us a stable monarchy, a world-wide empire,

“And rule of seas which tire the sea-mew’s wing.”

Meanwhile Mary in her English prison had heard of Maitland’s death. She was a brave woman, and she bore herself bravely to the last; yet she could not altogether conceal from those about her the sharp pang that hurt her when she learnt that her great Minister was dead. Shrewsbury brought her the news that the Castle had fallen. She told him coldly that he was ever the messenger of evil, of whatever might discontent and annoy her. Then she left him, — to purge her melancholy, as he said, alone. “*She makes little show of any grief,*” he added, “*and yet it nips her very near.*”<sup>1</sup>

Death during these last years had been busy; Knox and Moray and Norfolk and Maitland and Grange were gone; of the actors who had played the parts of kings and queens, only Elizabeth

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<sup>1</sup> Shrewsbury to Burleigh, 7th June 1573.



and Mary and Morton remained. Mary was to die on the scaffold; so was Morton: Mary, very simply and nobly, or (otherwise) with that finest art which conceals the art; Morton in a quaint Puritanesque fashion, the grim ministers of the Kirk killing the fatted calf for the last meal of the prodigal who had spent his substance (and the substance of other people) in riotous living. Elizabeth alone died in her bed; but the closing scene of a strange and eventful life was far from edifying; and had she anticipated what was to come—the weary and lonely days, the sleepless and spectre-haunted nights—she might have been tempted to exchange that prolonged paralysis of soul and body for a surer and sharper stroke.

THE END.

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